Daily Report

Soviet Union

FBIS-SOV-91-041
Friday
1 March 1991

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Bessmertnykh: Draft Arms Treaty with U.S. Soon

PM0103095891 Moscow IAN PRESS RELEASE in English; undated

[Interview with Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh by Vladimir Markov; date and place not given: "Aleksandr Bessmertnykh Talks To Novosti"]

[Text] [Markov] The statement by the Iraqi leadership on the possibility of pulling its troops out of Kuwait has caused varied reactions in the world, as it contained a number of unacceptable pre-conditions. Have there been differences of approach to a settlement of the conflict in the Gulf between the USSR and the European Community?

[Bessmertnykh] The talks in Moscow have shown that our approaches here are identical. The Soviet side stands for the unconditional with drawal of iraqi forces from Kuwait and for full- scale compliance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

We find, however, that the Baghdad statement contains positive nuances. It cannot be brushed aside as mere propaganda. There are elements that require clarification. If we are right and Baghdad is really taking the road of a political settlement, it is possible to hope for an end to the conflict in the Gulf. Afterwards, a start will be made to solving peripheral problems connected with the conflict.

[Markov] What role will Soviet-US partnership, and also cooperation with the European Community, will play therein?

[Bessmertnykh] I think that the Gulf problems will be tackled above all by the countries of the region themselves, and also by the United Nations, its Security Council and, naturally, those states which are able and ready to assist in solving them.

After all, the Soviet Union, the United States and the European Community can play a positive role, among other things, in restoring the peaceful infrastructure in the entire region and ensuring its security.

[Markov] It is known that the European Community rather sharply reacted to the tragic events in Vilnius and Riga. How did the discussion on the situation in the Baltics proceed?

[Bessmertnykh] It was normal and calm. We explained the constitutional principles which the Soviet government had guided itself by in performing the challenging tasks at the current stage in perestroyka. In turn, representatives of the EC told of how the public in the EC countries reacted to what was happening in our country.

The main thing is that after the discussion on questions connected with the events in the Baltics, representatives of the EC have developed, in my view, a better understanding of our problems. We have invited our partners to give serious thought to the idea that the furtherance of the CSCE process and an assured future of the continent as a whole are unthinkable without the Soviet Union's stability.

[Markov] It might seem lately that the disarmament process could be in danger of slowing down, particularly owing to the problems which have arisen in exchanging data on conventional armaments in Europe, might it not?

[Bessmertnykh] It's just possible that one got such an impression. In actual fact, however, work at the talks proceeds intensively. I think that the drafting of the Soviet-US treaty on strategic offensive arms will be concluded within the next few weeks.

As far as the exchange of additional data on the treaty on conventional armed forces, which took place the other day, is concerned, there will also be no special problems arising here, I think. Though the interpretation of some articles of the treaty should be clarified. After all, the Soviet leadership favours a dynamic continuation of the talks on arms control and disarmament.

Academician Denies Topaz Reactor SDI Role

91WC0068A Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Feb 91 Union Edition p 6

[Report by S. Leskov on comments by Academician N. Ponomarev-Stepnoy: "The Soviet Reactor: Not To Be Used for SDI!"]

[Text] **A number of news agencies have reported the sensational news that the U.S. Administration intends to acquire from the USSR a space nuclear installation to use in work on its SDI program. Doubt was cast on this information by IZVESTIYA No 8 of this year. On the return from the United States of a Soviet delegation led by Academician N. Ponomarev-Stepnoy, he explained to our IZVESTIYA correspondent what specifically occurred during the talks with the American side.**

Academician N. Ponomarev-Stepnoy, first deputy director of the Institute of Atomic Energy imeni Kurchatov, assured us that in the talks on the sale of a Topaz-2 nuclear power installation the Soviet side set two indispensable conditions. First, "know-how" in the design should not be violated and the reactor could not be dismantled. Second, the U.S. partners should provide firm guarantees that the device would not be used for military purposes.

Information linking SDI and the Soviet Topaz-2 reactor leaked to the Western press was immediately disavowed by U.S. experts who took part in the talks. J. Vetch, the president of the Space Power Company which is holding the talks with the USSR, made an official statement to the journal SPACE NEWS. Unfortunately, the rumors were not stopped. During the last visit a similar statement was made to the journal MILITARY NEWS by Academician N. Ponomarev-Stepnoy. It is the opinion of the Soviet scientist that the misunderstanding about

the possible use of the Topaz-2 in the SDI program could have resulted from the fact that throughout the world there are organizations working in space research that are in one way or another connected with the military-industrial complex. In this case, however, there is no justification for doubting the control measures that have been planned. It is a question only of the possible use of the Topaz-2 after its ground tests for a communications satellite. Moreover, at this time there is no question of the delivery of nuclear fuel from the USSR to operate the Topaz-2 in orbit.

With respect to the initial information indicating that the Americans have been showing great interest in the Soviet reactor, it is fully in accord with the reality. As N. Ponomarev-Stepnoy said, he has never in his life seen Soviet equipment attract so much attention. Academician R. Sagdeyev, who is presently living in the United States and who initially spoke out vigorously against the injection of nuclear reactors into orbit, changed his position when he had familiarized himself with the safety guarantees of the Topaz- 2, and supported the sale of the Soviet installation for joint research offering the two sides great promise. The sensation about the Topaz-2 is explained by the fact that the United States stopped working in this direction and, according to its own assessments, made it possible for the USSR to get 10 years ahead.

All of this is a cunning move to flatter that self-esteem that of late has too often been wounded here. If the contract now being worked on (worth approximately $10 million) to acquire a Topaz-2 is concluded, then the money received could be used to continue research in this field, which is a priority for us. For in 1991 no funding has been allocated for work on a space-based thermal emission converter. One of the developers of the device that caused the sensation in the West is, within the framework of conversion, being switched to the production of packaging for dairy products. But you will not be seeing that in America...

Founding of Successor to CEMA Delayed

LD2702221891 Moscow TASS in English 2155 GMT 27 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Georg Mikhailin]

[Text] Moscow February 27 TASS—The 40-year-long history of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA) has not yet seen a postponement of its session after all documents are agreed upon by the sides. Literally on the eve of the session, which was to be held in Budapest on February 27-28, some countries unexpectedly had some doubts, Stefan Zawodzinski, CEMA deputy secretary, told TASS today.

Immediately after a meeting of representatives of nine CEMA member states and CEMA leadership, Zawodzinski said that the Hungarian Goverment had officially notified the CEMA secretariat about such doubts on February 22, without mentioning their essence, though.

Nevertheless, the Hungarian Government suggested that the prime ministers of the CEMA member states hold the 46th session as scheduled in order to dissolve the organisation and discuss the state of and prospects for economic cooperation in the region. Representatives of Bulgaria, Vietnam, Cuba, Mongolia, Romania and the Soviet Union stated that these countries had no doubts.

The Hungarian, Polish and Czechoslovak sides stated that they were not prepared to sign the basic instruments of the Organisation for International Economic Cooperation (OIEC)—a successor of the CEMA—coordinated at the 134th meeting of the CEMA executive in the January this year.

In order to remove the arisen misunderstanding, the CEMA countries decided to arrange a meeting of their permanent representatives at deputy prime ministers' level. It will be held tentitavely in Moscow in mid-March, Zawodzinski said.

Touching upon a statement by the Hungarian news agency MTI that the Polish side had some additional proposals, Zawodzinski said that the new Polish Government has a right to additional proposals because the documents had been coordinated by the representatives of the Tadeusz Mazowiecki cabinet which resigned.

However, Zawodzinski believes that the Polish side should have conveyed their ideas before an official announcement about the 46th CEMA session, not to give grounds to "unnecessary ado". This illustrates only the inexperience of the new Polish cabinet, he believes.

Asked whether such stand of Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia was prompted by a desire to drag out the founding of the OIEC until the signing of agreements on their association with the European Community, scheduled for this summer, Zawodzinski said: "Whatever the political motives the leaders of the three countries are guided by, one should realise that it will be by far more difficult for individual CEMA member states to get integrated single-handed into the world economic system and its West European structures."

Warsaw Pact Ministers' 25 February Meeting Detailed

PM2802153991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 27 Feb 91 First Edition p 1

[TASS report: "Conference Over"]

[Text] In accordance with a prior agreement, an extraordinary conference of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee at foreign and defense minister level was held in Budapest 25 February 1991. Taking part in it were:

From Bulgaria: Foreign Minister V. Vulkov, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, and Colonel General Y. Mutafchief, defense minister; from Hungary: Foreign Minister G. Jeszenszky and Defense Minister L. Fur; from Poland: Foreign Minister K. Skubiszewski and Vice Admiral P. Kolodziejczyk, minister of national defense; from Romania: Foreign Minister A. Nastase and Colonel General V. Stanculescu, minister of national defense; from the Soviet Union: Foreign Minister A.A. Bessmertnykh and Marshal of the Soviet Union D.T. Yazov, defense minister; from the CSFR: J. Dienstbier, foreign minister and deputy premier, and L. Dobrovsky, defense minister.

Also taking part in the conference were Z. Mateyka [name as transliterated], general secretary of the Political Consultative Committee; Army General P.G. Lushev, commander in chief of the Warsaw Pact Joint Armed Forces; and Army General V.N. Lobov, chief of staff of the Joint Armed Forces.

A protocol on the ending of the military agreements concluded within the Warsaw Pact framework and the abolition of its military organs and structures as of 31 March 1991 was unanimously adopted and signed at the conference. A statement by the Warsaw Pact states was also adopted.

The conference participants had talks with Hungarian Prime Minister J. Antall and were received by Hungarian President A. Goncz.

The conference was held in a friendly and businesslike atmosphere.

Ministers Cited on Warsaw Pact's End

PM2802153791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Second Edition p 4

[Special correspondents V. Gerasimov and A. Gorokhov report: "Budapest Reverberation. Warsaw Pact Lowers Flags"]

[Text] Budapest—As already reported in PRAVDA, an extraordinary conference of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee was held in Budapest last

Monday at the level of foreign and defense ministers. A protocol ending the validity of the military agreements concluded within the framework of the treaty and abolishing its military organs as of 31 March 1991 was adopted and signed.

This conference lasted just a few hours, but I believe that it will "reverberate" for a long time to come. The decision set forth in the jointly elaborated protocol will undoubtedly affect military, political, and economic processes in Europe and the world. "The end of the split in Europe," the statement by the Warsaw Pact member states emphasized, "opens up a historic opportunity to impart a new quality to relations in the security sphere, while fully respecting the freedom of choice which every state retains."

...A thick mist hung over the Danube on that day. A great deal had also seemed unclear and "blurred" on the eve of the meeting, and so there was no lack of diverse forecasts in the local and foreign press. Some things were cleared up at a news conference after the conference.

Polish Foreign Minister K. Skubiszewski declared, for example, that his country does not need the Warsaw Pact Organization, i.e. not its political activity either. He contrasted the "former Warsaw Pact Organization" with the new ties among the countries of East Europe, such as those that have arisen recently among Hungary, Poland, and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic. And in the opinion of Hungarian Foreign Minister G. Jeszenszky, altogether a number of multilateral alliances and conglomerates will emerge.

With regard to forecasting the solution to many questions, however, there is "shakiness," uncertainty, and, quite honestly, "vacillation" in statements.

At the end of last year, for example, Hungarian Prime Minister J. Antall declared that the Warsaw Pact Organization would probably be preserved as a political consultative organization assisting the dialogue with the Soviet Union. We did not hear words of this kind either at the news conference or in the lobbies on this occasion. The same Hungary was on the point of rushing toward neutrality, but some of its politicians were demanding that it seek full NATO membership status. G. Jeszenszky has now said that Hungary does not want to join NATO, but that neutrality would also hinder it. At one time the Hungarians were advancing an initiative to create a Central and East European military alliance, but now they have firmly declared recently that no new military alliances will be created west of the USSR's borders.

In the lobbies of the Duna Intercontinental Hotel, where the conference was being held, we frequently heard arguments that East European countries should seek to join NATO.

During his recent visit to Budapest NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner declared on this score: "The Atlantic alliance has no intention of expanding. It is impossible to fit all the countries of Europe into a single institution. And we do not pursue the aim of provoking East European countries to oppose the Soviet Union... The new Europe must be built together with the Soviet Union." However, commenting on the disbandment of the Warsaw Pact military organization in France's LIBERATION, the same M. Woerner said that "NATO continues to exist as the main source of security and stability in Europe, as a counterweight to the still-powerful Soviet military machine."

The harmonious, nonconfrontational shaping of new relations between the East European countries and the Soviet Union, the surmounting of political and economic instability—much still has to be resolved without delay and in a friendly atmosphere in order to dispel the fog of uncertainty.

The Budapest meeting, which has eliminated the Warsaw Pact Organization's military structures, has given the "green light" on the way to a bloc-free Europe and taken important steps toward openness, a respectful dialogue, and good-neighborliness. NATO, by all accounts, is not changing course.

United States & Canada

Congressmen's Baltic Mission Assailed

PM2802223791 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 1 Mar 91 First Edition p 5

[Report by TASS observer A. Balebanov for SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA: "Unseemly Mission: Group of U.S. Congressmen Tour USSR"]

[Text] Of late there have been plenty of Western politicians who have not been averse to trying to influence the course of perestroyka in the Soviet Union. These people have particularly stepped up their activity in connection with measures taken by the governments of the Soviet Baltic republics, in particular the poll of the local population. Stress is laid on the fact that the presence of foreign observers in the localities gives these functions international recognition and legality. The result is that it seems as if Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia have already ceased to be republics of the USSR.

For the sake of objectivity I will add that it is frequently the local authorities themselves—whose aim is to secure their republics' secession from the USSR—who invite the foreign observers along. That is, it is a case of coordinated actions directed against union government policy.

An example of one such event was the trip to the USSR 10 through 15 February by a group of U.S. Congressmen headed by S. Hoyer, which clearly went beyond the agreed exchanges between the USSR Supreme Soviet and the U.S. Congress. It is noteworthy that this group arrived in the Baltics from Stockholm and went back that way before making a one-day visit to Moscow. This was a display of the "Baltic republics' total state autonomy." Although one must not forget that this group's visit to the Baltics would not have taken place at all without the agreement of the USSR Foreign Ministry.

When giving the go-ahead for Congressman Hoyer's group to visit the USSR, the USSR Foreign Ministry on 8 February—that is, before start of the visit—drew the attention of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow to the fact that there have recently been a large number of U.S. citizens in the Soviet Baltic republics and that some of them, moreover, are performing functions that cannot be described as anything other than gross interference in the Soviet Union's internal affairs, including participation in illegal actions. The U.S. Embassy asked for steps to be taken to protect members of the U.S. Congress from undesirable incidents that might cast a shadow over their visit to our country.

Despite this, people in the Soviet Union acted on the premise that the prestigious U.S. delegation could, if it so desired, play an active role in developing political dialogue with the Baltic leaders and spur on talks. Members of the U.S. Congress, who pride themselves on their Constitution, the oldest in the world, could have prompted their colleagues in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia to think about the importance of observing the constitutions of the republics and the country as a whole and to respect existing laws altogether. Local press reports indicate that members of the U.S. Congress chose another objective, however: They used their stay in the Baltics unthinkingly to support nationalist forces and effectively used their clout and influence to bolster the positions of one of the sides in an acute internal conflict in the USSR.

Thus, Senator A. D'Amato claimed that the problem of the Baltic countries is "only a matter of time, and their struggle for independence will without fail be crowned with success." (I would remind you that in 1989 this same d'Amato tried to illegally enter the USSR via the Soviet-Polish border to "supervise the course of elections" in the Lithuanian SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] but this attempt was stopped. The senator was then told that it does not befit a legislator's status to cross the border of a sovereign state without a Soviet entry visa). In Riga Congressman D. Ritter, a member of the group, attacked the activity of the "Equal Rights" faction in the Latvian SSR Supreme Soviet, stating publicly: "The CPSU wants to keep power here and has walked out of the legislature in the hope that Moscow will put them back." Congressman R. Durbin indulged in statements "about Lithuania's occupation by Soviet troops," Moscow's "oppression of the Lithuanian people," and so forth. While group leader S. Hoyer said that the U.S. Congress is working on a bill on recognition for the Baltic states although it is well known that the U.S. Administration is not raising this question, not least because under the U.S. Constitution the question of this kind of recognition does not come within the powers of the Congress but rather the country's President. Nevertheless, engaging in some wishful thinking, the U.S. Congressman said at the Latvian Supreme Soviet that "the very fact that our delegation is here represents recognition of your legislature and government."

To use diplomatic language, the U.S. Congressmen's behavior in the Soviet Baltic can be regarded as inadmissible, to say the least. The actions of the members of Congress not only do not help; on the contrary, they impede the settlement of problems in the Baltics and go against the trend toward strengthening the trust and mutual understanding between our two countries that can be observed today. In in the emergent Soviet-U.S. partnership it is important for officials in the United States not to overstep the mark in interstate relations; to take a responsible attitude toward the complex processes taking place in the Soviet Union; to make no attempt to retard or egg them on; and to make no endeavor to weaken, much less disintegrate the USSR, but rather proceed on the premise that the continuation of reform and the strengthening of stability and the USSR's economy constitute a guarantee of peace and prosperity not only for the Union, but also for the United States and the whole world.

China

CPSU's Ivashko Begins 5-Day Visit to PRC

Seen Off by Shenin, Falin

LD2502212591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1930 GMT 25 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow, 25 Feb (TASS)—Vladimir Ivashko, deputy general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, left for the PRC today on a working visit at the invitation of the CPC Central Committee. He was seen off at the airport by Oleg Shenin, member of the Politburo and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee; Valentin Falin, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee; and Yu Hongliang, PRC ambassador to the USSR.

Arrives, Welcomed by Qiao Shi

LD2602082291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0528 GMT 26 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Vladimir Kashirov and Vladimir Oreshin]

[Text] Beijing, 26 Feb (TASS)—V.A. Ivashko, deputy general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, arrived here today on a friendly visit at the invitation of the CPC Central Committee. He was met at the airport by Zhu Liang, member of the CPC Central Committee and director of the CPC Central Committee International Liaison Department; N.N. Solovyev, USSR ambassador to the PRC and member of the CPSU Control Committee Commission; and other officials.

On his arrival in the PRC capital, V.A. Ivashko stated that his trip to China provides the opportunity to hold friendly meetings and conversations with the CPC leaders, to become more deeply acquainted with the course of socialist construction in the close neighbor of the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, to exchange experience on the socioeconomic and political transformations taking place in the two countries, to discuss questions of the further development of the whole complex of Soviet-Chinese relations and interparty ties, and other problems of mutual interest.

In the government residence of Diaoyutai, V.A. Ivashko was welcomed by Qiao Shi, member of the CPC Politburo Standing Committee. The PRC and the USSR maintained friendly relations for many years, he said, then a difficult period set in. However, after the visit to China in May 1989 by M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, our links normalized.

In his turn, V.A. Ivashko noted with great satisfaction that China, with which the Soviet Union has close links, is, in fact, the first foreign country he is visiting in the capacity of deputy general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee.

During the five-day visit to the PRC, V.A. Ivashko will meet in Beijing with Jiang Zemin, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, will hold talks with Qiao Shi and will also visit Shanghai, a major industrial center.

Begins Talks With Qiao Shi

LD2702054391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0254 GMT 27 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Vladimir Kashirov and Vladimir Oreshin]

[Text] Beijing, 27 Feb (TASS)—Chinese Communists welcome the visit of Vladimir Ivashko, deputy general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and note with great satisfaction that his first foreign trip has been made precisely to China. This was said by Qiao Shi, member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, at the talks with the Soviet party leader which started here today. The current visit, Qiao Shi stressed, will have great importance for developing relations between our two parties and countries. He wished Vladimir Ivashko a successful stay in China.

On behalf of the CPSU and Mikhail Gorbachev, its general secretary, Vladimir Ivashko conveyed greetings and wishes of success to the Chinese Comunist Party and the whole Chinese people. Over the last two years, he noted, relations between the USSR and the PRC have been developing successfully in the various fields, including along the line of interparty links.

Meets With Jiang Zemin

PM2802115591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Second Edition p 4

[Report by correspondent B. Barakhta: "Friendly Meeting"]

[Text] Beijing, 27 Feb—V.A. Ivashko, deputy general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, had a meeting in the PRC capital today with Jiang Zemin, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee.

Talks were held in a friendly, unconstrained atmosphere. Comrade Jiang Zemin had worked in Moscow during the fifties and has not forgotten the Russian language. He began the meeting in Russian, time and again recalling our apt sayings.

Important questions of fundamental significance were discussed during the meeting. It was pointed out that perestroyka in the USSR and the reform in the PRC constitute an objective, historical process. It is irreversible, and our countries have arrived at it by taking the difficult path of socialist building. The loyalty of both the Soviet Union and China to the socialist idea and the socialist system was emphasized. Despite all the zigzags of our winding path, the future belongs to socialism, as this is the most humane system.

The idea of the peoples' friendship was aired as an important topic. V.A. Ivashko and Jiang Zemin pointed out that the peoples' friendship is the cornerstone not only of relations inside the country but also in the international arena.

It was stated with satisfaction that relations between our states, peoples, and parties have been developing in the ascendant since M.S. Gorbachev's visit to China last May. They have entered a new stage distinguished by dynamism and purposefulness. Not all reserves have been exhausted in this bounteous field, including in the sphere of economic cooperation. In this connection Ivashko expressed gratitude to the Chinese leadership for the offer to grant the Soviet Union considerable commodity credit. This initiative is of not only economic but also political significance, marking a manifestation of friendly feelings toward the Soviet people.

The similarity in our states' foreign policies was noted. This is an effective factor in strengthening peace throughout the world.

The CPSU and the CPC, it was pointed out at the meeting, will continue to make efforts to develop and deepen friendly relations. The importance of continuing top-level political contacts in accordance with the existing accords was emphasized. V.A. Ivashko passed to Jiang Zemin a personal message from M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and president of the USSR. After voicing gratitude for the friendly message, the CPC Central Committee general secretary wished M.S. Gorbachev and all Soviet Communists successes in carrying out the socialist renewal of society.

The talks were held in an atmosphere of comradely friendship, frankness, and mutual interest in each other's successes. N.N. Solovyev, USSR ambassador to the PRC, participated in them.

Delivers Gorbachev Message

LD2702191391 Moscow TASS in English 1841 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Text] Beijing February 27 TASS—Welcomed with warm greetings in Russian, Vladimir Ivashko, deputy general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, today met Chinese Communist Party leader Jiang Zemin.

Ivashko conveyed a message from President Mikhail Gorbachev to him. Jiang wished Gorbachev and all Soviet communists successes in their socialist renewal of society.

Ivashko and Jiang discussed the role and activities of the Soviet and Chinese communist parties in economic, social and political reforms in the USSR and China.

They expressed satisfaction with Sino-Soviet relations that entered a new stage after a Sino-Soviet summit in May 1989.

They are characterised by a dynamic and purpose-oriented character, as well as by fruitful and mutually beneficial ties in all fields.

Friendship and good will between the Soviet and Chinese peoples, their interest in the success of perestroyka and reforms play an important role in the development of both countries and the promotion of positive tendencies in the world.

The Soviet and Chinese communist parties will pool efforts to promote friendship between the two countries and continue summit meetings as agreed.

Ivashko and Jiang also discussed the expansion of bilateral contacts in various spheres, including in economic cooperation.

Today, Ivashko met Qiao Shi, a member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party. They stressed the significance and usefulness of ties between the Soviet and Chinese communist parties and sharing experience of party work under present-day conditions.

The meetings were held in the atmosphere of friendship; frankness and interest in mutual successes.

Chances for Rapprochement With PRC Viewed

LD2702201391 Moscow World Service in English 1210 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Text] The Deputy General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, Vladimir Ivashko, is now in Beijing for talks to set the ground for a forthcoming visit to Moscow by the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Jiang Zemin. Can this be seen as a sign of restoring contacts between the two parties? Commentary by Aleksey Kondratyev:

Given that the memories of ideological battles the two ruling parties have been locked in for almost 25 years are still alive today, the tentative question of improving relations between them is well understood. At times it seemed, particularly at the height of China's cultural revolution, the two parties had broken off for good and the chances of patching up their quarrel were nil. The damage for [as heard] the destruction of the once-friendly contacts in economic, scientific, cultural and military areas, seemed to be well beyond repair. Things had (?soured) to an extent that internationally the two nations started to be seen as trump cards in the diplomatic gambling of the cold war period.

Regrettable as these facts may be, they are being brought up to underline the measures approach taken by this generation of party and government officials on both sides to normalizing and promoting bilateral relations, rather than to rub salt into the healing wounds. Since Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to China in May 1989, there has been a remarkable change in bilateral relations

covering a wide range of areas, and the desire by Moscow and Beijing to renew party-to-party contacts must be seen as part of this process.

Significantly the resumption of these contacts is taking place on a new basis, with both parties dashing aside their (?mentorial) attitudes of the past. Conventional wisdom suggests, and everyday life proves, that ideological differences can lead nowhere. There is no sense for the Soviet Communist Party to seek ideological fallacies in China's slogan of building a Chinese-style socialism proclaimed by the 12th congress of its communist party in 1981. Alternatively, it would be counterproductive for Chinese communists to try to put to an ideological test this country's perestroyka, launched by its communists.

The two parties are now trying to embrace similar reforms and in essence both face similar problems. It would seem the Soviet communists have a lot to learn from their Chinese counterparts and China's 10-year reform and achievements, especially in the farming sector. Indicatively the two parties have now abandoned their claim for a missionary role on the international arena, including third world countries. As a result, Mongolia and Laos normalized their relations with China, the warring sides in Cambodia are engaged in peace talks, military tension had eased along the borders with the Soviet Union and China and between China and Vietnam, there is a sign of improvement on the Korean peninsula, and Soviet troops are out of Afghanistan. There is a change for the better in some African countries, where the two parties, interests were at odds in the past.

The present rapprochement between the Soviet and Chinese Communist Parties is prompted by modern realities.

Northeast Asia

Akhromeyev Views Continuing Kurils Dispute

OW0103114591 Tokyo KYODO in English 1126 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, March 1 KYODO—Soviet presidential adviser Sergey Akhromeyev has proposed that Japan and the Soviet Union open talks on the return to Japan of two of the four northern islands which the Soviet Union has held since World War II.

Akhromeyev, in an exclusive interview with KYODO NEWS SERVICE on Thursday, said the two countries should open the territorial negotiations as Moscow had promised in a 1956 document to return Shikotan and the Habomai group to Japan. He said this was his personal view.

This was the first time a high official in the government of President Mikhail Gorbachev's administration has voiced such an opinion, even personally.

The Soviet Union has previously refused all negotiations on the return of any of the islands.

Akhromeyev, a former chief of general staff and also a former first vice minister of defense, is now serving as adviser to Gorbachev on military affairs.

The islands in dispute include two larger islands, Etorofu and Kunashiri. Japan has long called for the return of all of the islands, located off Japan's northernmost main island Hokkaido. But the Soviet Union has steadfastly refused.

The 1956 Japan-Soviet Joint Declaration which established diplomatic ties between the two countries says that the Soviet Union would hand over Shikotan and the Habomais, a group of seven small islands, after a bilateral peace treaty was concluded. It did not mention Etorofu and Kunashiri.

But the Soviet Union changed its stance after Japan and the United States concluded a security treaty in 1960. Moscow said at that time that a major change had emerged in the international situation and has since maintained that no territorial issue exists between the Soviet Union and Japan.

The islands are known in Japan as the northern territories. Lying to the northeast of Hokkaido, they were seized by the Soviet Union at the end of World War II.

Akhromeyev's comment came only one and half months before Gorbachev's scheduled visit to Japan April 16-19.

Akhromeyev said the disputed islands have a strategically vital position in the Sea of Okhotsk.

He said, in the 1956 declaration the Soviet Government clearly showed its readiness to return the Habomais and Shikotan.

"It is not worthy of a great nation like the Soviet Union to go back on its position once it has stated it," Akhromeyev said.

Akhromeyev said the military would voice its opinion on the islands to the Soviet leadership, but any decision on their return would be made by the president and the Supreme Soviet.

"If this issue is negotiated, careful consideration will be given to not just the military advantages, but also to political, economic and other factors," he said.

Akhromeyev's comment indicates the Soviet military is adopting a comparatively flexible attitude and is prepared to accept a decision from the president after consultations with all concerned, diplomatic sources here say.

The Soviet military was earlier reported as strongly opposing the return of the islands for strategic reasons, the sources said.

Akhromeyev indicated the Soviet Union will maintain its military presence in the area and has no plans for reducing the estimated full army division posted to the islands.

PRAVDA Chief Editor's Tokyo Visit Reported

Meets Japanese Foreign Minister

PM2802122991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 26 Feb 91 Second Edition p 5

[Report by PRAVDA correspondent I. Latyshev: "Visit to Tokyo"]

[Text] Tokyo, 25 Feb—Academician I.T. Frolov, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and chief editor of PRAVDA, arrived in Japan today at the invitation of a group of public figures who include legislative deputies and representatives of the scientific public and the business world. The program for his stay in Japan includes meetings with government ministers, legislative deputies, scientists, leading businessmen, and also with press representatives. The intention is for the Soviet guest to give a lecture at a symposium devoted to perestroyka and Soviet-Japanese relations, along with a number of speeches on local television.

This afternoon I.T. Frolov met Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama. In the course of the meeting the Soviet guest and the Japanese minister exchanged opinions on a number of questions relating to the contemporary international situation and Soviet-Japanese relations. Both sides devoted a great deal of attention to USSR President M.S. Gorbachev's historic visit to Japan this April. The Japanese foreign minister said that his country's public have friendly feelings toward the Soviet leaderand are looking forward to and pinning great hopes on his visit. He expressed confidence that the USSR President's visit to Japan would begin a new phase in the development of Japanese-Soviet relations and help deepen mutual understanding and broaden good-neighborly ties between the two countries' peoples.

Previews Gorbachev Visit

PM2802110991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 27 Feb 91 Second Edition p 6

[Report by correspondent I. Latyshev: "Meetings in Japan"]

[Text] Tokyo, 26 Feb—USSR President M.S. Gorbachev's upcoming visit to Japan in April was the main topic of a series of talks held today in Tokyo by I.T. Frolov, CPSU Central Committee Politburo member and editor in chief of PRAVDA.

It was precisely to this event, which is scheduled to be the first visit by the head of our government to Japan in the history of Soviet-Japanese relations, that particular attention was given in statements by Ichiro Ozawa, secretary general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party [LDP], who received the Soviet guest at the party headquarters. As the leader of the Japanese conservatives stated: "We want President Gorbachev's visit to open a new page in the history of our two countries' mutual relations." The two sides expressed a mutual wish to encourage a widening of contacts between the CPSU and the LDP on the basis of strengthening common human values and humanist ideals.

The talks that I.T. Frolov had today with other prominent legislators were also extremely full.

Many interesting questions were raised in I.T. Frolov's talks with a group of leaders of the Japanese chamber of young businessmen. It turned out that this organization brings together in its ranks about 60,000 Japanese entrepreneurs aged between 20 and 40, who are interested in mastering the art of conducting business affairs in the conditions of the market economy and who wish to exchange experience with foreign entrepreneurs. Chamber President Yoshiike Kawashima stressed in particular the desire of many young Japanese businessmen to share knowledge with young Soviet people who are pursuing management studies in connection with the Soviet Union's transfer to a market economy. In this regard he expressed his wish that PRAVDA should play an intermediary role in this project. Mr. Kawashima also announced to his Soviet guest the intention of the Japanese chamber of young businessmen's leadership to offer free aid in the form of money and medicines to Soviet victims of the Chernobyl disaster.

I.T. Frolov's meeting this evening with Toshitada Nakae, president of the ASAHI newspaper company, and a group of prominent staff on this newspaper took place in a good and really friendly atmosphere. As a result of the meeting both sides confirmed their intention to broaden further friendly cooperation between the editorial staffs of PRAVDA and ASAHI.

Interviewed on Gulf Situation

OW0103070491 Tokyo NHK General Television Network in Japnese 1330 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Interview with PRAVDA Chief Editor Ivan Frolov by unidentified correspondent; at NHK, date not given—recorded; Frolov speaks in Russian with superimposed Japanese translation]

[Text] Justice has won in the war. We cannot be happy, however, to be frank. That is because the justice has been won by violence and blood.

The United States should have been more prudent, and should have sought a political solution.

In the background of the United States failur to do so may have been pressures from the military and the defense industry within the United States.

In the Soviet Union there are people who are happy about the improved relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. There are people who are happy

that the cold war has ended. However, the politics in practice are not that simple. We have to be cautious about loosening alertness unnecessarily.

The United States criticized us in loud voices about shedding blood in the Baltic nations. Of course, I think there was a humanitarian reason for it.

To look back upon it now, it appears that the United States did that to turn the eyes of the world away from the destructive violence—the war in the Gulf.

Near East & South Asia

Bessmertnykh Holds 28 Feb News Conference on Gulf

LD2802211291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1713 GMT 28 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Igor Peskov and Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow, 28 Feb (TASS)—Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh held a news conference here today in connection with the termination of combat operations in the Gulf region. He made the following introductory statement:

"Last night, a few hours before the U.S. President announced the decision to end military operations in the Gulf region, I had urgent consultations with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker on further steps to be taken by the USSR, the United States, and other members of the coalition in connection with this new important turn of events.

"Immediately after that, I personally reported on the emerging situation to President Gorbachev and received concrete instructions about our current actions vis-a-vis Baghad, the UN Security Council, and Washington, as well as about our further policy with respect to the Persian Gulf and the Middle East. Several priority tasks have now emerged. First, it is necessary to completely rule out any resumption of hostilities in the conflict area. Contacts are now being established for this purpose between military representatives of the sides involved and we are doing our best to facilitate them.

"Second, it is very important to hold a meeting of the UN Security Council, which must get down to prompt and thorough discussions of problems concerned with the overall political settlement of the Iraq-Kuwait conflict. We agree—and we have discussed this matter with Secretary of State Baker—to hold a meeting of the five permanent members of the Security Council before the council's official meeting. We proceed from the premise that the task of this most important international body is to create reliable political and legal prerequisites for the formal and complete termination of the war. As before, the Soviet Union will continue its active efforts to find solutions acceptable to all the sides concerned.

"Third, the international community is confronted with the task of getting down without further delay to the eleboration and harmonization of post-crisis arrangements in the region. The most important point is to establish a security system which will not only draw a line under the recent events, but will also guarantee against future armed clashes in the region. The Soviet Union has maintained and continues to maintain active contacts with the principal states to find common approaches to solving this fundamental task.

"Of course, we are continuing our contacts with the American side. For instance, we have agreed with the U.S. secretary of state to continue our exchanges of views on this issue, including on his forthcoming trip to the region. We hope to find many common points in the positions of the USSR, the United States, and other nations. We realize that the future depends largely on how we will be able, through international efforts, to create a structure for ensuring security in the region and guarantee its reconstruction.

"At the same time, I wish to stress precisely that the future of the region belongs and must be determined primarily by the peoples who inhabit it. For our part, we must only help them ensure and guarantee the effectiveness of the future development of the situation affecting these countries. We are resolved to urgently begin—together with the Arab states, Israel and all other sides involved in the conflict—the settlement of the Middle East problem, which is the main source of instability, lack of trust, and the continuing arms race in the region.

"To sum up, I wish to say that the termination of military operations in the Gulf region is a major and very important international event. We welcome the liberation of Kuwait and the restoration of its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and the return of its lawful government to the country. We believe this is the first time the internatonal community has displayed its common will to oppose the annexation of one state by another.

"From the very outset of the crisis the Soviet Union, as you know, has sought an optimal solution to the situation, primarily by peaceful means. This policy of ours can be traced throughout the period following 2 August. President Gorbachev has consistently shaped our political and diplomatic policy on this issue, including active contacts with leaders of all the principal states involved in the crisis. Even at the last dramatic stage, Mikhail Gorbachev had an active dialogue with leaders of several major powers to find a peaceful solution.

"Perhaps, this precedent is not entirely perfect; but it may—and we wish to believe it will—prevent similar situations in the future, situations that do not correspond to the new epoch of peaceful policy that is now making headway, though not without difficulty. If these new tendencies are allowed to strike root, mankind will be able to live in conditions of genuine security."

Then A.A. Bessmertnykh answered questions from correspondents.

[Correspondents] How do you see the future security structure in the region, and what is Iraq's role in this structure?

[Bessmertnykh] First, the security structure in the region must be based on the interests of the countries in the region. These interests must be distinctly and clearly defined by the states themselves, and this system will be constructed on their basis and taking them into account. It is completely natural that the United Nations, the Security Council, and its permanent members, including the Soviet Union and the United States of America, will have a bearing on the creation of such a security system.

What is important now is to find enough elements that coincide with the main parameters of this system. The Soviet Union is actively looking into this issue by being in contact with, first and foremost, the leading states of the region. We are absolutely convinced that there can be no sufficiently reliable and viable system in the Persian Gulf zone unless Iraq plays its important role in it.

[Correspondent] You said that now is the time to look into the Arab-Israeli conflict and the issue of a settlement in the Near East as a whole. But on what basis? Is there a concrete plan to resolve this issue?

[Bessmertnykh] I think the issue of a settlement in the Near East, which existed long before the crisis in the Persian Gulf zone, during the crisis, and probably will exist for some time after the crisis, now deserves the most acute attention. It cannot be ruled out that in some paradoxical way the events in the Persian Gulf zone give an additional impulse for a more active search for the solution to this issue, which is one of the most chronic, most dangerous, and destabilizing conflict situations in the world.

Recipes for settlement of the crisis have been put forward by many states. Our position with regard to this is not changing. I think we all must now take more active steps to tackle this issue after we have seen what instability in one of the zones of this vast region leads to. That is why we hope the Arab states and Israel, and obviously all the other participants in this conflict, and states which are outside the conflict zone, will purposefully search for the necessary decisions. We are, on our part, ready for this, ready to establish contact with all those who wish to do so.

[Correspondent] Does the Soviet Union guarantee there will be no more supplies of Soviet arms to Iraq or other sides in the Near East? What is the Soviet position on the supply of arms in the future?

[Bessmertnykh] Issues that are connected with the supply of arms to the Persian Gulf zone and to the Near East region as a whole deserve serious attention from all those who receive weapons or supply them to the region. The Soviet Union cannot consider its approach to this issue one-sidedly or unilaterally. We have begun to discuss this issue with the United States and also with a number of states in the Near East region. We think a positive solution will be found on the basis of approaches worked out collectively and a collective restriction regarding the supply of weapons to one of the most explosive zones in the world. This issue is pressing and urgent. I think the issue of supplying arms can be actively and productively discussed when the problem of creating a system of security in the Persian Gulf zone is being tackled.

[Correspondent] How far will it be possible to eliminate weapons of mass destruction in the region, and will all the points of the Soviet-U.S. statement in Helsinki, including settlement of the Near East problem and the withdrawal of foreign troops from the region, be fulfilled?

[Bessmertynkh] During the course of the conflict in the Persian Gulf, we voiced serious concern with regard to the danger of using weapons of mass destruction. But this problem is broader than the zone encompassed by the firing. The problem of weapons of mass destruction also touches on the entire Near East region. Therefore, when the issue of stabilizing the situation, of creating a security system, a settlement, is being tackled, a great deal of attention will necessarily have to be devoted to this issue, for the countries of this region merit a stable future and a peaceful life.

I would like to emphasize that there are no qualitative changes in our approach to settlement of the Near East problem that would indicate a departure from our fundamental positions. We consider the problem to lie not in the adequacy or inadequacy of the ideas relating to a settlement. It lies rather in a lack of will and readiness on the part of a number of influential states to invest their political efforts in the search for the necessary solutions. The time is now ripe, I think, when all states may take a fresh look at the stereotypes of their approaches and start tackling this problem more actively. What we said about this in Helsinki of course continues to be valid.

[Correspondent] Is the end of the war the victory of the "Gorbachev plan?"

[Bessmertnykh] The end of the military conflict in the Persian Gulf zone is the result of the collective efforts of all the states which took part in seeking a settlement, and which considered it possible to unite in order to avert such conflicts and the seizure of individual countries by others in the future. Many states took part in creating this historic precedent, including the United States, other members of the coalition, and the Soviet Union, the last of which consistently pursued the line of a political solution. So I would say that every country that participated in this movement may claim the success of its policy and at the same time not one of them should assert that it was the only country to secure this success.

[Correspondent] What are the USSR's plans on the Palestinian issue?

[Bessmertnykh] When I speak of a Near East settlement, then I course have in mind first and foremost the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. The Palestinian problem, as the core of a Near East settlement, is on the agenda, and a solution to it must be found—the sooner the better.

[Correspondent] Some observers abroad, and in the Soviet Union as well, think that in recent years Soviet foreign policy has been defeated by the Americans. What is your opinion?

[Bessmertnykh] First, I am absolutely unable to agree with that. I feel that the time when states sought to talk at every opportunity about victories, conquests, and successes is passing away; although, unfortunately, in some places, a second habit has been preserved, that of lambasteing the other side's policy at every opportunity. We have heard statements of this sort in recent days, including some from previously very respected U.S. Senators.

In our country, too, there are some figures suffering from a peculiar kind of political masochism, who would prefer to lambaste their own homeland and their own policy for the sake of some sort of aims which are incomprehensible to me. Evidently, in the epoch (?of pluralism everything) is possible. Yet, when such important and serious things as a country's foreign policy are evaluated, it is necessary for the idea and the declarations made about it to not exceed the bounds of common sense.

[Correspondent] Speaking in Minsk a few days ago, President M.S. Gorbachev described Soviet-U.S. relations as still fragile [khrupkiy]. How would you describe their present state?

[Bessmertnykh] I agree entirely with that assessment. The fact is that these relations, which have a solid objective foundation for their development, are at the same time sometimes exposed to a serious and damaging intrusion by subjective factors. That is the fragility which, unfortunately, is still present. In the struggle between the objective requirements of the stable development of Soviet-American relations and subjective factors, the balance sometimes gets upset. When subjective factors gain the upper hand, instability appears in relations and then the threat arises that they might be thrown back. The subjective factor—that means the opinions and policy of the leaders of governments and parliaments and the sentiments of public opinion—requires that figures who deal with Soviet-American relations either from within—when they work on them—or from without—when they comment on them—should be guided primarily by considerations of high responsibility because Soviet-American relations, whether we like it or not, are a determining factor in the present international situation. Many processes in world developments will depend on how they develop.

At the same time, I would like to express the hope and confidence that these relations will pass intact through the phase of the struggle between objective and subjective circumstances and will withstand the tests, just as they have now withstood the test during the Iraq-Kuwait conflict.

[Correspondent] Are contacts planned with the PLO leadership in the course of implementation of the Soviet Union's policy to settle the crisis in the Near East? Does the Soviet Union intend to reopen its embassy in Kuwait?

[Bessmertnykh] Our contacts with all parties whose interests are affected by a settlement in the Near East will continue. Contacts with representatives of the state of Palestine have not been interrupted. They continued even during the Iraq conflict. We plan to reopen the Soviet Embassy in Kuwait as a matter of the greatest urgency.

[Correspondent] The whole conflict in the Persian Gulf took place against the background of a thr .at from Iraq to use chemical weapons. Is it implied that provision will be made within the framework of the settlement of the postwar situation for monitoring or some kind of guarantees concerning Baghdad's stocks of chemical weapons and, possibly, other types of weapons of mass destruction?

[Bessmertnykh] That is one important aspect of a future system of security in the region that I expect will be discussed.

[Correspondent] After what has happened in the Gulf, how do you assess the future of relations between the Soviet Union and Iraq?

[Bessmertnykh] Our relations with Iraq naturally changed during the crisis. What had been relations of close friendship and cooperation in a great many different fields become relations of a rather peculiar nature when the Soviet Union, which categorically rejected Iraq's seizure of Kuwait, took the side of the forces which were trying to get Iraq to withdraw its troops.

Our relations with the state of Iraq will continue to develop, as with all other states, not only of that region, but of the world. I think the other members of the coalition will also develop their relations with Iraq. A new era is beginning; new relations are beginning. We have all learned a serious lesson from this conflict, a lesson which will be borne in mind not only in the context of international efforts we will all be making but also with regard to the bilateral ties that will be developing with particular states in the Gulf zone.

[Correspondent] Does the Soviet Union have an interest in the political survival of Saddam Husayn?

[Bessmertnykh] We are dealing with Iraq, its people, and those leaders of Iraq the people put forward and support. We feel that to decide in advance what attitude to take toward this or that leader, regardless of the sovereign right of the people of that country, would be interfering in its internal rights.

Belonogov Remarks on Various Gulf Issues

Views Cease-Fire Call

PM2802162991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Union Edition p 4

[Report by G. Charodeyev: "A. Belonogov: Our Position Remains Unchanged"]

[Text] Aleksandr Belonogov, USSR deputy foreign minister, addressed Soviet and foreign journalists 26 February and said that Iraq had begun to withdraw its troops from Kuwait. He described this fact in itself as a "fundamentally new element in the situation in the Persian Gulf region and a great change in Iraq's position."

In this connection a U.S. correspondent asked the question: The allied troop command is saying that there is no evidence that Iraq has begun to withdraw its units. Does the USSR have precise information about this—intelligence information, for instance?

[Belonogov] It is hard for me to answer this question. I am relying on reports that I have received from the battlefield. According to the information we have received, Iraqi troops are leaving Kuwait and moving toward their own territory. I am not casting doubt on the Iraqi president's statement which was, as is well-known, conveyed to the Soviet Embassy on the night of 25 February. Nor am I questioning what Saddam Husayn said on the radio to the effect that the Iraqi troops' withdrawal from Kuwait will continue and will be completed... [Belonogov ends]

The deputy minister then said that Moscow's position on the question of a Gulf settlement remains unchanged. A new situation is emerging and events are developing. A real opportunity has emerged of suspending the military phase of the conflict and moving on to the phase of a political settlement. We are acting from normal, pan-human positions. It must be borne in mind that every hour of fighting costs more and more human lives. It is obvious to us, A. Belonogov continued, that it is in the general interest to stop hostilities. There are no longer any real, weighty reasons for continuing them....

The Soviet Union proceeds on the premise that the Security Council should perform its task and play a constructive role in the conditions that have taken shape to ensure that the resolutions are implemented within the shortest possible time.

An Arab journalist inquired: How do people at the USSR Foreign Ministry regard what official U.S. representatives have said to the effect that Iraq's statement regarding its troop withdrawal from Kuwait does not fully accord with the UN Security Council resolutions?

[Belonogov] If you want to, you can find many reasons and excuses for remaining deaf to the calls for a very speedy cease-fire that are being voiced in many Arab countries. We are proceeding on the premise that Baghdad's position has now become extremely clear, that Iraq is setting no conditions. It is ready, officials say, to withdraw its troops from Kuwait within the shortest possible time. We do not see any flaws in Iraq's position that would provide grounds for delaying a cease-fire....

Eyes Iraqi Withdrawal Statement

PM2802102091 Moscow TASS PRESS RELEASE in English 19 Feb 91

[Interview with Aleksandr Belonogov, deputy foreign minister, by Vladimir Markov; place and date not given: "Aleksandr Belonogov On the Logic of Peace"]

[Text] [Markov] Did Baghdad's statement of February 15 come as a surprise to the Soviet side?

[Belonogov] The Soviet government has been engaged in a dialogue with the Iraqi leadership for a long time, trying to persuade it to opt for the only sensible move—a pull-out of Iraqi troops from Kuwait. This was the objective pursued by the mission of Yevgeniy Primakov, the Soviet President's personal envoy.

The statement by the Revolutionary Command Council of Iraq came as a direct result of the Primakov mission. It would be an exaggeration to say that it was precisely what we wanted to hear from Baghdad.

But it is crystal clear that the Iraqi statement of February 15 was the first official document of the supreme governing body of the country, which admitted in principle the inevitability of an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. This was a big step forward.

[Markov] Yet the reaction of the US and other Western countries to the Iraqi statement has been outrageously negative. Why?

[Belonogov] Those in the West who have tried to belittle the significance of the Iraqi move right away are wrong. One ought to take into account the impact the said statement may bear on the Iraqi population and particularly on the armed forces, above all those deployed in Kuwait. They have heard from their leadership that they will have to pull out sooner or later.

At the same time, the statement leaves a conflicting impression, because the agreement to the troop pull-out is heavily strings-attached. Some of the terms are obviously unacceptable to the allied forces. Regrettably, the West focused primarily on such terms formulated by Baghdad.

[Markov] Will Moscow try to convince Saddam Husayn that the strings attached to the statement are unacceptable?

[Belonogov] It definitely will. For some of the terms are based on entirely artificial linkages which hardly contribute to the overall objective of putting a quick end to bloodshed.

[Markov] Is there any chance to predict further developments in the Gulf area?

[Belonogov] Whoever asserts that a revival of Kuwait as a sovereign state is inevitable will hardly be wrong. The question is what price will have to be paid for that, how much blood will be spilt, how many destructions are yet to be made on the way.

The Soviet Union has been trying to abort the war whose finale is evident, as part of an effort to achieve the objectives formulated by the UN Security Council's resolutions, on the one hand, and on the other, to safeguard Iraq and spare its people from more suffering.

[Markov] One question widely discussed at present is about the credibility and possible date of the ground war in Kuwait....

[Belonogov] I am not familiar with the plans of the members of the allied forces. But one thing is evident: now that Baghdad has made its statement, followed by diplomatic contacts with Iraq to clear out the situation and prospects for translating the logic of war into that of dialogue, any large-scale hostilities would harly contribute positively to the process.

I would like to offer my personal point of view. As current hostilities are limited to air raids, these can be easily stopped. An appropriate decision by one party will suffice to do that. Things will be different when hard-fought ground battles begin.

Then a ceasefire would be much more difficult to achieve. This explains why unleashing a land war, following a chance to achieve a peaceful political settlement, would hardly serve the ends of the common cause.

[Markov] This mirrors transparent differences between the Soviet Union and the United States in their attitudes to a peaceful settlement. How serious do you think those differences are?

[Belonogov] There are things on which we are united with the US and the rest of the world, but there are also some which divide Moscow and Washington. In such conditions, I would not belittle the meaning of the aspects which have helped almost the entire international community to achieve unity in its bid to rehabilitate justice and Kuwait's independence.

This officially formulated goal, including in the UN resolutions, is a common denominator of the positions of different countries, the Soviet Union and the United States among them.

[Markov] During the Gulf war, everybody seems to have quickly forgotten what was once known as US-Soviet "partnership", a term that found its way only recently to political parlance.

If there is no co-operation and partnership, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to develop a reliable regional security framework after the war.

[Belonogov] I quite agree with that statement. We ought to co-operate with an eye on a post-crisis settlement. What I have in mind is not only the USSR and the USA but also all the permanent members of the UN Security Council. As long as they are not involved in the overall effort to achieve a settlement, a system to guarantee regional security of states would remain unachievable.

Only if all permanent members of the UN Security Council are involved, can we avoid rivalry and by so doing pave the way for a quiet life of the peoples in that part of the world.

Belonogov Receives Kuwaiti Ambassador 1 Mar

LD0103115891 Moscow TASS in English 1145 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Belonogov met Kuwaiti Ambassador to the Soviet Union 'Abd al-Mohsen al-Du'ayj here today.

On behalf of the Soviet leadership, Belonogov congratulated the Kuwaiti people and the emir of Kuwait with the restoration of Kuwait's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Kuwaiti ambassador thanked the Soviet Union for supporting Kuwait and for its contribution to liberating the country.

The conversation, held in a warm and friendly atmosphere, focused on the Gulf situation and Soviet-Kuwaiti relations.

Also today, Belonogov met Iranian Charge d'affairs A.R. Bikdeliyat [name as received] the latter's request to discuss the situation in the Gulf and bilateral relations.

Gorbachev Advisor Interviewed on Soviet Gulf Role

AU2702161391 Berlin DER MORGEN in German 25 Feb 91 p 3

[Interview with Vyacheslav Dashichev, foreign policy adviser to USSR President Gorbachev, by Monika Graessler and Anke Kertscher; place and date not given: "The Soviet Union Could Have Prevented the War"]

[Text] [DER MORGEN] The allies' ground attack in the Gulf has started despite all efforts made by Gorbachev. Is this a defeat for him?

[Dashichev] I think that everything possible was done to prevent a bloodbath, and in my opinion, the peace plans that we presented could have been an opportunity to end the war and secure an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. This is why I think that his initiative must be appreciated. On the other hand, anything had to be expected from Saddam Husayn: Like every totalitarian dictator he is unpredictable.

[DER MORGEN] So [German writer Hans Magnus] Enzensberger was right in comparing Husayn to Hitler?

[Dashichev] Dictators of the kind of Hitler, Husayn or Stalin have much in common, for example outright aggression against their own people and against neighboring peoples. All they are interested in is increasing their power at any cost. This applies to all political bandits of the 20th century, including Pol Pot, Mao Zedong, or Mussolini.

[DER MORGEN] Will the USSR stick to its policy of military nonintervention?

[Dashichev] Basically, I rule out a military intervention by the Soviet Union, because it would not make any political or strategic sense. In addition, one must take into account the atmosphere among our people, who are strictly against military actions after Afghanistan.

[DER MORGEN] What encouraged the USSR to take that diplomatic initiative?

[Dashichev] There were many reasons. One was that Gorbachev could once more prove his commitment to peace and strengthen his reputation both in the Soviet Union and abroad, which suffered damage through the events in the Baltics. He could once more act as a mediator. His efforts for ending the war were also consistent with the interests of the Iraqi people.

[DER MORGEN] Might the accusation made by the conservatives not also have played a certain role? They claimed that by supporting the UN resolutions, the USSR "betrayed a friend."

[Dashichev] Yes, that was an important reason. Gorbachev had to take into account the conservatives' opposition to Shevardnadze's policy, which was strictly guided by fulfilling the UN resolutions, whereas the conservatives favor a position of sympathetic neutrality toward Husayn. Yet, by standing shoulder to shoulder with the United States, Shevardnadze was ready to evict Husayn from Kuwait. A tough Soviet position on this issue after the invasion might have made this war avoidable.

Yet meanwhile Soviet foreign policy has focused on new lines. Soviet conservatives have complained that Soviet foreign policy has abandoned the "class standpoint." This proves that they are still influenced by the old enemy images.

[DER MORGEN] Who are "the conservatives?"

[Dashichev] Primarily, they include the military leadership and dogmatic forces in the party apparatus, who continue to support the policy of Gromyko and Brezhnev and who fail to accept new thinking in either foreign or domestic policy.

[DER MORGEN] Did Gorbachev, who has come under strong pressure, try to get some relief in domestic policy by taking that political initiative?

[Dashichev] A success in foreign policy would have certainly improved the president's reputation at home and encouraged the continuation of the policy of perestroyka. Gorbachev has certainly proven that he is an excellent tactician. He will not be hurt because his initiative was not successful. What counts is that he showed commitment to peace.

[DER MORGEN] Did he not also have to show consideration for the 50 million Soviet Moslems?

[Dashichev] This has certainly played a certain role in his considerations, because the Moslems in our country are also increasingly influenced by fundamentalism and extremism. Nevertheless, there have not been any pro-Iraqi demonstrations in our country.

[DER MORGEN] Was Gorbachev trying to prepare the ground for the USSR's return to the international stage as a superpower.

[Dashichev] The thinking in terms of superpower is deeply rooted in the minds of the military and greater Russian chauvinists. They fear that the United States might use the Gulf war to remove the USSR as an actor from the international stage. I think that the United States, which itself is in great economic difficulties, is currently not able to do that.

[DER MORGEN] How important is the influence of the Soviet military on foreign policy?

[Dashichev] Under Brezhnev and Andropov they intervened very strongly in foreign policy and would like to do so. Since Bessmertnykh does not have the same authority as his predecessor Shevardnadze he had to make concessions.

The military stop at nothing to maintain their position, not even at telling lies. In the seventies they lied in connection with troop strength and the number of our tanks. They lied when the South Korean aircraft was downed in the Far East. They also lied about the radar station in Krasnoyarsk, and they continue to lie, which can be seen in their transfer of tanks behind the Urals.

The military harm our national interests. Their desire for strategic balance has ruined our economy. It was the supporters of such a policy who are responsible for the misery of our people.

[DER MORGEN] Thinking of the events in the Baltics I wonder whether there is an acute danger of a military coup in the USSR?

[Dashichev] If the military knew how to lead this country out of the economic crisis they would have seized power long ago. Yet economic problems cannot be solved by forceful means. One of the weak points of the conservatives is that they do not have a program. Still, in the event of uprisings caused by starvation among our people one cannot rule out such a coup.

[DER MORGEN] What is the position that the CPSU concedes to the Army in the current situation?

[Dashichev] According to the 4 February declaration on the current situation and the tasks of the communist party the Army, the troops of the Interior Ministry, and the KGB have to be supported. These instruments of power are backed as the main elements for preserving the power of the party and conserving the old social order. This indicates a return to the old methods and old political contents.

[DER MORGEN] Do people not realize that it is absurd to cling to the monopoly of the party and to hope that ultimately one will be saved by the market economy?

[Dashichev] Yes, it is nonsense. Yet the taste of power is sweet, even for Gorbachev. People want to preserve it in the same way they want to preserve their privileges. What he told Honecker is also true for himself: Those who are late will be punished by life.

[DER MORGEN] Well, but who could actually replace Gorbachev?

[Dashichev] Only the democratic wing of perestroyka—the radical reformers—would have a moral right to be considered as an alternative to Gorbachev. Yet, at the moment they do not have the legitimate means to come to power, although they can count on the support of the majority of the population.

[DER MORGEN] Has Yeltsin not done himself a disservice by pressing for Gorbachev's resignation?

[Dashichev] Yeltsin's demand was most foolish because it only encouraged the conservatives to accuse him of striving for power. It cannot be ruled out that a special session of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation will be convened at the instigation of the dogmatics in the Russian Communist Party, in which a motion of no-confidence will be introduced against Yeltsin.

Reactions, Comments Continue on Gulf War

Saddam's Ouster Sought

PM2802161991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 1 Mar 91 Union Edition p 5

[Report by special correspondent B. Ivanov: "Ambassadors Return to Kuwait"]

[Excerpt] Riyadh—[passage omitted] The question of what the situation will turn out to be in Iraq after the war is now troubling many local politicians, military experts, and diplomats. In the opinion of a number of diplomatic sources from Arab countries belonging to the anti-Iraq coalition, a so-called "new strategy" drawn up by the United States and now approved by virtually all the members of the coalition has been gathering momentum in recent days. Its essence is that the liberation of Kuwait and the results of the military campaign should be used as a means for ousting Saddam Husayn from power. Among the Gulf states a realization exists that as a result of the devastating and futile war with Iran and of the aggression against Kuwait the Iraqi President has now been transformed into a "serious destabilizing factor" in the region and his departure from the political stage seems to be an essential condition for the preservation of stability and for the consolidation of security in the Presian Gulf region.

Saddam Blamed for Tragedy

PM2802171191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 1 Mar 91 Union Edition p 5

[Article by Rami Sha'ir under the "Palestinian Publicist's Opinion" rubric: "Who Is to Blame for the Tragedy of Iraq and the Arabs?"]

[Text] Some people claim that the coalition forces, by delivering massive air strikes against installations in Iraq and Kuwait, have exceeded the Security Council mandate on the use of military force to liberate Kuwait. Despite the fact that each explosion in an Arab city pains my soul, I am reluctantly forced to admit that to talk about the sphere and range of that mandate is senseless.

It is clear to any sensible politician that the adoption of the decision to use military force against Iraq meant a difficult, wide-ranging, and bloody war and that the gigantic war machine which was set in motion cannot be stopped until the war aims have been achieved. Indeed, this was evident to the Iraqi command, too: I am convinced that among the Iraqi army supreme command there were still some intelligent, far-sighted people who realized even before hostilities began the dimensions of the tragedy that would befall Iraq if Saddam Husayn persisted in his desire to hang on to captured Kuwait. Today, however, one can only wonder at the fact that the calamity failed to make Iraq's leaders see sense.

Matters even went as far as a bloody land battle: Even the heaviest destruction inflicted on Iraq by air bombardment and the obviously hopeless situation of the Iraqi army did not immediately make Saddam Husayn moderate his arrogance: It seemed that he was determined to sacrifice his troops, his country, and his people.

Of course, a sober study of the balance of forces even before the war began confirmed that Iraq had no reason to hope for military victory in a confrontation with the multinational forces. That point was understood in Baghdad, incidentally. Consequently, hopes were pinned mainly on the psychological factor, the eruption of an antiwar movement in the world, on emotions in the Arab countries, and finally on casualties among the civilian population, whereby the multinational forces could be charged with waging total war against civilians. But I think that the tragedy in the bomb shelter happened too late for the Iraqi leadership, that is, it happened when the structure of a regional superpower had been largely destroyed and when it was practically impossible to halt the war machine.

I stress once more: You cannot justify attacks on civilian installations, you cannot wash away the blood of innocent victims. But war is war, and the one who began it dealt a blow to both himself and his people. Iraq's tragedy is after all not only that it was the target of bombing but first and foremost that the head of state was a ruler who twice in 10 years has plunged the country into bloodshed unprecedented in Iraqi history.

You can often hear it said that Saddam's calculations were wrong, that he overestimated his strength. Those comments do not stand up to criticism at all. It would be naive to suppose that the coalition allies, having obtained a mandate for the use of force to liberate Kuwait in accordance with a Security Council resolution, would blindly follow the classic pattern of ground battles and try to drive the 500,000-strong Iraqi grouping out of Kuwait under missile fire from Baghdad. The fact that in the initial stage the war would have to be waged mainly from the air and that installations and bases in Iraq itself would be the targets of the bombs and missile attacks was obvious to all, I think. The Iraqi leadership's position is all the more immoral: It drew fire onto Baghdad and Basra, confident that it would sit things out very calmly in its concrete bunkers until world public opinion urged the West to cease bombing forthwith. From that viewpoint the Iraqi people were the hostage of a group of individuals who doomed them to death and suffering. If the ends justify the means, in the Iraqi leaders' opinion, the price—the tragedy of an entire people—not only cannot justify the ends which Saddam Husayn set but even makes them criminal.

The medieval Islamic philosopher al-Biruni stressed that every criminal is destined to pay in retribution—either in this world or in heaven. Being destined to retribution on earth makes the criminal particularly dangerous. His egoism is boundless, the criminal's instincts make him drag not only his enemies but his brothers into the grave with him, too. Today the implacable statistic of the war confirms: The war was hopelessly lost from the outset by Iraq and nothing could change the course of events. Even if Iraq had decided to use chemical weapons, that could only have aggravated its position because it would have caused the coalition forces to intensify their attacks. That being the case, the question would have been: Why did people die, and why was a country which has already endured considerable upheavals doomed to destruction?

The destruction of Iraq's infrastructure, its plants, bridges, and roads, means the annihilation of the results of many years of toil and billions of petrodollars sent up in smoke. And all this through the fault of a clan whose ambitions proved stronger than common sense. The dictator and his entourage, in the opinion of Western analysts, will very soon cease to exist in the political arena. But the Iraqis—how will they live in the future, how will they feed themselves, what streets will they walk along? Had they given thought to that down in the deep bunkers, the order for the withdrawal of the occupation forces from Kuwait would have been given in the first week of January—before the "goodwill pause" elapsed.

As for the future, thought should be given to the tragic role which the country's present leadership played in changing the balance of forces in the region as a whole, the possible changes in the political horizons of the Near East, and the possible intensification of the influence on it of those forces which have no interest in resolving such urgent regional problems as the Palestinian problem. Iraq's departure, albeit temporary, from the region's political scene will affect all Near East affairs. That is surely realized most keenly of all today by the Palestinians. Admittedly, there are quite a few among us who confuse the cause with the result. It should not be forgotten that the main source of the misfortunes of the region's peoples was the Iraqi regime and that it bears the main responsibility for what has already happened and for what may happen.

I think that I am expressing not only my own opinion but also that of many political scientists when I say that two fundamental conditions must form the bulwarks of a peace settlement: The full restoration of Kuwaiti sovereignty and the preservation of Iraq as a viable state. It is obvious that these two conditions are interlinked.

But since the international community will not accept any alternative to the complete fulfillment of all the UN Security Council resolutions on the Persian Gulf conflict, all peacemaking efforts must be well thought out. It would be criminal to give the Iraqi elite and those who support it grounds for new illusions that they will still manage to save face and somehow preserve the semblance of success.

On the contrary, I think that now more than ever before it is necessary to open the Iraqi people's eyes to the fact that they were deceived, ensnared, that the demagoguery and overweening pride of a handful of adventurists cost them tens of thousands of lives, and that the fruits of the labor of a whole people have been turned to dust through the fault not of the allied bombers but of those who wear the uniforms of the top ranks in the Iraqi army.

It was only after his complete rout and defeat that Saddam Husayn decided to "voluntarily" leave the occupied neighboring country. But does he really not understand that he must leave not only Kuwait but also the political stage? That he, the culprit in the tragedy not only of his own people but also of all Arabs, who is hated by millions and who deceived millions, will not be in the presidential seat for long? His departure is first and foremost in the interests of the Iraqi people themselves. If he remains, the dreams of a new regional security system and of broad economic cooperation will not be realized either, nor will the new, long-awaited horizons open up for political cooperation—primarily in the settlement of conflicts—in which the bitter lessons of the present war would have been very useful. May they not have been in vain...

Saddam's Defeat Hailed

LD2802172391 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Nikolay Agayants commentary]

[Text] While members of the Security Council are examining Baghdad's request, events in the Persian Gulf zone are developing with such speed that what has become very obvious is not only the totally bankrupcy of Saddam Husayn's hopes for holding occupied Kuwait, but also, in my view, the indisputable moral breakdown of the dictator's regime. The military machine of the aggressor has collapsed under the assault of the multinational forces of the anti-Iraqi coalition. Husayn himself has been forced into an unprecedented admittance of his readiness to carry out all 12 UN Security Council resolutions. Such a decision is now being portrayed by some of the media, including the Soviet media, almost as a gesture of Iraq's goodwill and its efforts for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. It is also reported that the Revolution Command Council headed by Husayn, which was in session yesterday, has expressed the hope that the Soviet Union and friendly states on the Security Council will adopt effective measures for a ceasefire.

In particular—and it is the case—we speak about the need to defend the honor and reputation of the USSR president. This is true. There is a relevant law on this. All the same, how can we be proud of the reputation of our great country, which is still on friendly terms with dictators like the one in Baghdad, which behaved fairly strangely, not to say in a double-dealing fashion, during the conflict in the Persian Gulf? Why are we so eager in our rush to throw a lifeline to Husayn, to defend him from deserved punishment for the crimes he has committed, including those committed against his own long-suffering Iraqi people? The aggressor is being beaten, they are driving him with all their might, throwing him out of Kuwait. PRAVDA meanwhile publishes material on the first page entitled: "The Order has been Given. Kuwait is to be Evacuated."

Desert Storm is sweeping away all in its path, and the war is drawing to a close. As General Schwarzkopf, commander in chief of the multinational forces, has stated: There is nothing between us and Baghdad except 150 miles. If the seizure and destruction of Iraq was part of our task, then no one would hesitate to carry it out."

At this time, that same PRAVDA publishes the lengthy and totally confused thoughts of Yevgeniy Primakov to the effect that the war, in his words, should have not taken place. Why then was such a profound thought not put to Husayn by our peacemakers six months ago? Why did we all make so much fuss about him? Was it for a peaceful settlement? I am afraid that this is not quite true, or more accurately, it is totally untrue, as there are no such things as small lies. There is nothing more shameless than to put forward as the truth declarations that are well-known to be false. These words come from a Persian writer of the Middle Ages who incidentally, like Saddam Husayn, is a Muslim, but who was an honorable man. This, as they say in Odessa, makes for two big differences.

Future Remains Unclear

PM2802182391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 1 Mar 91 First Edition pp 1,5

[Report by PRAVDA correspondent V. Linnik under the "Persian Gulf" rubric: "Still No Peace Yet"]

[Text] New York, 28 Feb—So, the 100-hour war, as the U.S. President said, is over. The allied troops have been given the order to stop offensive operations.

It is still unclear what lies behind such a sudden declaration of victory and the cease-fire. Obviously the Iraqi Government's agreement to implement the UN resolutions, coming as it did in the last few hours of Wednesday evening New York time, deprived the United States of the formal right to continue combat operations.

G. Bush's decision is surrounded by a host of conditions. It refers to the return of prisoners from the anti-Iraq coalition (though nothing is said about exchanging them for Iraqi prisoners), Iraq's stopping its bombardment of other countries, and a meeting to work out a cease-fire with representatives of the Iraqi command. A truce has been declared for the next 48 hours and entered into force at 0000 hours New York time 28 February. G. Bush said that hostilities will be resumed if the conditions set out are not met.

Why did the President call the war that has ended the 100-hour war? This reflects the double accounting methods that are so customary for the United States in general and were apparent in the course of this war, in particular. The military operations against Iraq began, as is well known, on the night of 17 January and ended 27 February—consequently, they lasted 43 days. Or, according to the President's calculations, don't the massive bombings of Iraq and Kuwait count? However, that is also how U.S. losses are calculated.

But there is a tremendous distance between military victory and a political victory. In this respect things are by no means as triumphant for the United States as Washington would like to present them today. No war in the Near East has brought the region stability—that is an axiom shared by virtually all specialists in the Arab world.

The Arab-Israeli conflict remains acute. The world community reacted extremely resolutely and severely by means of the United Nations to Iraq's violation of international law and the UN Security Council resolutions. The punishment was severe—Iraq is in ruins as a result. But after this can we close our eyes to Israel's failure to carry out fundamental resolutions with respect to the occupied territories?

The war cost the United States, according to the most conservative estimates, roughly $50 billion. The value of a number of U.S. military companies' shares soared atop this wave.

What are the results of the victory to date? It has been announced that C. Powell, chief of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and N. Schwarzkopf, commander of the allied forces, will become five-star generals. President Bush's popularity is at its zenith. Talk of his "weakness" that was fashionable recently has become a thing of the past, most observers assure Americans.

Silence has descended on the Persian Gulf. But this is still not yet peace.

Continuing Soviet Role Foreseen

LD2802172191 Moscow TASS in English 1701 GMT 28 Feb 91

[By TASS political analyst Askold Biryukov]

[Text] Moscow February 28 TASS—Iraq on Wednesday notified the U.N. Security Council chairman of its readiness to unconditionally implement all the 12 resolutions on the Gulf crisis adopted by the Security Council. On the same day, President George Bush announced that offensive operations would halt at midnight and told Iraq under what conditions he would order complete ceasefire.

This evokes hope that the Gulf war is over. The time has come, as President Bush put it in his address to the nation, to look beyond the victory and the war and engage in post-war planning.

He said strengthening peace was now the priority task and a difficult one.

And so it is. Despite the festering wounds, grief and suffering of those who were singed by the war, despite devastation and smoldering ruins, it is now time to think about how faster and better to achieve the aim set by the international community—to restore peace and security in the region. The liberation of Kuwait does not solve fully either the crisis in the Gulf or the entire set of problems of the critical situation in the Middle and Near east. Moreover, it is now becoming clear that these problems are now foregrounded and call for immediate consideration by the international community and a search for the most effective and practical ways to solve them.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd told a news conference on Wednesday after talks with the U.S. Administration leaders that peace in the Middle East after the war with Iraq had moved to the focus of discussions.

The basis for the region's peaceful future, he said, was provided by ensuring security in the Gulf and guarantees that none of the countries in the region would seek to possess mass extermination weapons, as well as by settling the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The British Foreign Secretary stressed that an end to hostilities between Arabs and Israelis was critically important for the success of the peace process in the Middle East as a whole.

Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordonez pointed to the need for the countries of the region in the post-war period to adopt confidence-building measures, establish a regional security system and hold a conference on security and cooperation in the Mediterranean. It will be necessary to solve the Palestinian problem within the framework of the Rome and Madrid declarations and guaranteeing Israel's security with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Iraq must decide on its own political regime by itself, he said.

Few, yet vociferous speakers can be heard in the United States, calling to bar the Soviet Union from the participation in the post- war settlement. What is to be made of such calls? Are they an expression of the lingering military euphoria? Or of the nostalgic yearning for the past when the cult of force was worshipped? Or do they voice the desire to disrupt the newly-moulded and still fragile Soviet-American relations?

It would not be amiss to recall at this point that from the very beginning the Soviet Union went along with the entire world community which condemned the Iraqi aggression. It participated in the working out and adoption of all 12 U.N. Security Council resolutions and consistently demanded that Iraq comply with all of them. Soviet recommendations to the Iraqi leaders played a substantial role in compelling Iraq to conform to the will of the international community.

The USSR will continue ot contribute most actively to efforts aimed at establishing lasting peace and ensuring dependable security and stability in the region. As before, it will do so in close cooperation with all members of the world community of nations.

Israeli Views Suggest Possible Compromise With Arabs

PM2802163791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Union Edition p 4

[Report by special correspondent Yevg. Bay and V. Skosyrev: "There Is No Avoiding Compromise"]

[Excerpt] Israeli Prime Minister Y. Shamir has voiced concern that the allies in the anti-Iraq coalition may not bring the war to a victorious conclusion. Israel will not feel secure if Saddam Husayn does not vanish from the international arena.

It is clear, however, that Israeli security does not only depend on the fate of the dictator in Baghdad.

What does Shamir think about this? If you interpret his words literally, it looks as though there is no point in cherishing hopes of establishing stability in the Near

East. Shamir has rejected the possibility of exchanging the occupied territories for guarantees of peace for Israel.

In short, the tone of the speech was tough. However, members of the Israeli parliament from the same Likud bloc as Shamir told us that a compromise is possible. If direct talks begin with Arab states, with mediation from the great powers, it is even quite possible that an agreement could be concluded on self-determination for the Palestinians. However, members of the right-wing Likud bloc and the opposition Labor Party are still not venturing to discuss this in public. They are considering the mood of their fellow citizens, who are indignant that the Palestinians rejoiced when missiles fell on Israeli cities.

Member of Parliament Yosi Sarid is one of the few politicians who, even now, does not tire of calling for reconciliation with the Palestinians. He believes that a future accord in the Near East should include three elements: Arab states' recognition of Israel's right to exist; recognition of the right to self-determination for all peoples, including the Palestinian people; and guarantees of security for Israel from the United States and maybe from the other great powers. [passage omitted].

USSR Said Ready To Help Remove Gulf Oil Slick

LD2802152791 Moscow TASS in English 1504 GMT 28 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[Text] Moscow February 28 TASS—The Soviet Union is ready to help remove the oil slick in the Persian Gulf, Sergey Antonov, a spokesman for the Soviet Ministry of Merchant Marine, told TASS today.

According to Antonov, the Saudi Government approached the Soviet Union with the request to help on a contract basis. A Soviet expedition, comprising two specially-equipped multi-purpose ships, an oil-collecting tanker and 25 specialists in oceanology, ornithology and ecology, is prepared to leave for the Gulf immediately.

The record-high pollution of the sea called for creating an international emergency centre to help Saudi Arabia, the country that was the worst hit by the ecological disaster.

The centre is now operating within the framework of the International Marine Organisation, of which the Soviet Union is a member.

Since the centre was established, groups of specialists and relevant hardware have been sent to the Gulf from the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Canada, Norway and Japan. Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium, France, Denmark, Finland and Australia have expressed readiness to help.

According to International Marine Organisation specialists, from one to two million barrels of oil products were dumped into the Gulf. Experts believe the cleanup will be very complicated: the forthcoming season of sand storms is one of many complicating factors.

70th Anniversary of Afghan Treaty Noted

Afghan Leader Interviewed

LD2702204291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1600 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Interview with Afghanistan President Najibullah by Vladimir Pasko and unidentified Soviet journalists in Kabul on 27 February]

[Text] Tomorrow it will be 70 years since the signing of the first Soviet-Afghan treaty of friendship. On the eve of the anniversary, Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, received a group of Soviet journalists in Kabul. Answering a question by our special correspondent, Vladimir Pasko, on the significance of the treaty nowadays, the president said:

[Begin Najibullah recording in Dari with superimposed Russian translation] The signing of the treaty of friendship with Soviet Russia was an event of historical importance. We are celebrating the 70th anniversary of this treaty at a time when the policy of national conciliation in Afghanistan is four years old. In light of this policy, the need arises today of looking at the treaty anew. This must be a matter of giving our relations and cooperation a mutually advantageous character. Over the last 70 years goodneighborly relations and relations of friendship and cooperation between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union have been maintained by various regimes, both under the king and President Daud. That is, despite changes in political regimes, the goodneighborly relations between our countries were maintained and have deep historical roots.

Now, in Afghanistan there are possibilities for the further broadening and strengthening of Afghan-Soviet cooperation on a mutually advantageous basis. The presence in Afghanistan of rich deposits of copper, iron ore, barites, and other types of useful minerals enables capital investments for their joint or unilateral exploitation to give huge advantages to the country. It is also possible to raise the question of joint cooperation in the area of producing electricity, creating animal farms, and cotton-producing enterprises on both sides of the Amy Darya [river on Afghan-USSR border] and enterprises for exporting wool, leather, fruit, dried fruts, and so on.

In other words, just now in Afghanistan there is every possibility to further develop cooperation with the Soviet Union on a mutually advantageous basis. Private enterpreuners and national capital are prepared to invest tens of millions of dollars in the Soviet Union, either on a joint or unilateral basis. I think the possibilities and the reserves that we have allow us, on the firm foundation of our friendship, to give a new character to Soviet-Afghan relations and cooperation. [end recording]

Afghan Foreign Minister Comments

LD2702104491 Moscow TASS in English 1006 GMT 27 Feb 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Andrey Pershin]

[Text] Moscow February 27 TASS— "The treaty on friendly relations between Soviet Russia and Afghanistan had turned a new page in political and diplomatic contacts between the two countries, laid a solid foundation for strengthening and expanding good-neighbourly relations," Afghan Foreign Minister 'Abdul Wakil told TASS. Wakil is now visiting the Soviet Union in connection with the 70th anniversary of that treaty, which will be marked tomorrow.

Wakil stressed that the policy of national reconciliation, the fourth anniversary of which was observed in Afghanistan this year, laid the beginning for many steps by the Afghan leadership to establish peace and stop the bloodshed in the country. "During these four years the republic's leadership renounced the one-party form of government, established a new political system, declared pluralism in political life. Thereby, it laid a legal foundation for radical social reforms," he said.

"The experience of past years, especially the two years when the country had to defend itself independently, have shown that there is only one way to settle the Afghan problem—through peaceful intra-Afghan negotiations, because nobody can get the upper hand in the ongoing war. The changes that have occurred in the world during the past few years prove the correctness of this conclusion," Wakil stressed.

Supreme Soviet Delegation's Pakistan Visit Reported

LD1802231891 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1930 GMT 18 Feb 91

[Report from Islamabad by correspondent Rustam Galiullin]

[Text] Official Islamabad has not received Soviet legislators for 14 years; Pakistani legislators have not been seen in the Soviet Union for 13 years. At the end of February last year, 14 National Assembly deputies began to break the ice of distrust by accepting an invitation from the USSR Supreme Soviet and making a (?10-day) trip round our country. A great deal was written about this in Pakistan at the time, and today, when receiving a Soviet delegation, this was described as a good start.

Four deputies of the USSR Supreme Soviet, headed by Yuriy Kamalovich Sharipov, member of the Presidium and chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities commission on issues of social and economic development of the union and autonomous republics, have done a great deal to make this good start into a good tradition. The meetings and thorough conversations with the president of Pakistan, the Senate chairman and the National Assembly speaker, the minister for legislative affairs; attendance at a National Assembly session; a trip round the cities of Karachi, Islamabad, and Lahore—all of this enables one to conclude that the restoration of interparliamentary ties will from today become an important integral part of the Soviet-Pakistani dialogue which has been developing over recent years.

The National Assembly speaker (Ghaur Ayub) considered it important to comment that the arrival of the Soviet delegation was well-timed. The government is currently finishing the formulation of an economic program, and plans to seek cooperation with the Soviet Union in key economic spheres such as nuclear power engineering and road construction, and also to develop it in the spheres where great interest is maintained, such as oil and gas prospecting, construction of another metallurgical combine—in the north of the country this time—and, of course, in the sphere of trade.

The meetings did not pass over serious problems concerning relations between the two countries, first and foremost the problem of settling the situation in Afghanistan. The understanding by both countries of the impossibility of resolving the Afghan problem by military means was repeatedly stressed during the conversations, and this is regarded as exceptionally important, because there are still influential forces in the country, primarily military ones, which cherish the hope of resolving this problem by force.

The Soviet legislators considered it important to declare the following: They consider that Pakistan could do a great deal more to achieve peace in Afghanistan and on its borders, on conditions, furthermore, which take account of the interests of all forces involved in the conflict. It was also brought to the notice of the Pakistani side that many people in the Soviet Union are getting the impression that Pakistan could do a great deal to resolve a problem which is extremely painful for Soviet society, namely the liberation of Soviet servicemen held captive in Afghanistan. Everyone to whom our legislators appealed, whether the president or the legislative speaker, the minister for legislative affairs or the Senate chairman, all gave assurances that they would do everything they could to free our boys.

CPSU's Falin Receives Indian CP Leader

PM2102094391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 19 Feb 91 Second Edition p 5

[TASS report: "Comradely Meeting"]

[Text] A meeting was held 18 February between V.M. Falin, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, and I. Gupta, general secretary of the Communist Party of India [CPI] National Council.

During the talk, which was held in the friendly atmosphere typical of CPSU-CPI relations, there was a thorough exchange of information on the two parties' activities. A number of topical questions of the present-day international situation were touched upon, particularly relating to the Gulf crisis.

Rogachev Holds Delhi Political Consultations

PM1502163591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Feb 91 Union Edition p 6

[TASS report: "Consultations Over"]

[Text] The Soviet-Indian political consultations in Delhi, during which talks were held between I.A. Rogachev, USSR deputy foreign minister, and Indian Foreign Minister V.C. Shukla and his first deputy—M. Dubey—have ended.

The joint opinion was expressed that Soviet-Indian relations are of self-sustaining [samostoyatelnyy] value since they are based on the long-term interests of our countries' peoples and are not subject to short-term fluctuations. The considerable similarity between the positions of the Soviet Union and India on most topical international problems, including the Kuwait crisis, was noted. The Soviet Union welcomes the improvement of relations between India and China and a whole number of other neighboring states.

V.C. Shukla stated that at this difficult time for the USSR India does not intend to change its relations with its long-standing friend, and continues to view the Soviet Union as a united, and great power.

The problems of the Asia-Pacific region were also discussed from the standpoint of seeking ways to settle persisting conflicts in that region.

The first session of the Soviet-Indian Cultural Cooperation Commission has been held. It was chaired on the Soviet side by I.A. Rogachev, and on the Indian side by B. Ghosh, government secretary for culture.

The Soviet representative held meetings with N. Rao and N. Singh, prominent figures in the Indian National Congress (I) Party.

The sides noted that the meetings were substantive and of mutual benefit.

Latin America & Caribbean

Cuba's Escalona Leads Delegation to Moscow

Meets With Falin

PM2602123391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 21 Feb 91 Second Edition p 5

[TASS report under the general heading "Official Reports"]

[Text] V.M. Falin, secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, met 20 February with a delegation from the Cuban National Assembly headed by Assembly President J. Escalona, which is in the Soviet Union.

In a friendly atmosphere the participants in the talks exchanged information on domestic political processes taking place in the USSR and Cuba and expressed readiness to develop Soviet-Cuban relations. Certain current questions of the world situation, above all issues associated with the development of events in the Gulf, were also examined.

Hold Talks With Yanayev, Laptev

PM2602161591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Feb 91 Union Edition p 5

[TASS report: "Exchange of Opinions"]

[Text] On 20 February USSR Vice President G.I. Yanayev received J. Escalona Reguera, president of the Cuban National Assembly of People's Power and head of a Cuban legislative delegation that is paying an official visit to Moscow.

In the course of a friendly conversation they touched on questions of the state of and prospects for Soviet-Cuban relations and expressed a mutual desire to see their further onward development based on a quest for new, more effective and mutually beneficial forms of cooperation.

G.I. Yanayev provided detailed information about the perestroyka being implemented in the USSR, in particular about the reform of state structures, work on the concept for the new Union Treaty, and the preparations for the all-Union referendum.

The Cuban people are geared up to strengthen and develop ties with the Soviet Union. J. Escalona Reguera, president of the Cuban National Assembly of People's Power and member of the Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee, said this 20 February during a meeting in Moscow with I.D. Laptev, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Soviet of the Union.

During an exchange of information about the situation in both countries, the delegation head pointed out that the changes in the Soviet Union are affecting the situation in his homeland. We are analyzing your experience of reform, he said.

Wishing to give the delegation members as full a picture as possible of everything happening in the Soviet Union, I.D. Laptev began with the CPSU. Those who thought that the party could now be given up for lost have miscalculated, he said. The chairman of the chamber said that an increase in the number of people entering the party's ranks has been observed of late. In his opinion, this is a sign of an increase in the CPSU's prestige—the party which the people, weary of political and economic disorder, see as the force capable of acting effectively to secure order in the country.

Questions of legislative activity were allotted a prominent place during the conversation.

Received by Lukyanov

PM2502155591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Feb 91 Union Edition p 4

[TASS report: "Improving Ties"]

[Text] A.I. Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, met 21 February with a delegation of Cuban legislators headed by Juan Escalona Reguera, chairman of the Cuban National Assembly of People's Power, which is paying an official visit to the Soviet Union.

In the course of a conversation held in the traditional friendly atmosphere, the sides provided one another with detailed information about the most important aspects of the sociopolitical and economic processes taking place in the USSR and Cuba and exchanged opinions on the main areas of activity of both countries' supreme legislative organs.

Questions of the present state of and prospects for Soviet-Cuban relations in various spheres were analyzed from constructive positions and mutual readiness was voiced to further deepen these relations in the spirit of friendship and cooperation.

USSR People's Deputy Kim Yen Un and Jose Ramon Balaguer, Cuban ambassador to the USSR, took part in the conversation

On the same day the delegation had a meeting at the USSR Supreme Soviet International Affairs Committee. Greeting the guests, A.S. Dzasokhov, the committee's chairman and member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo, pointed out that, when assessing Cuban policy, people in the Soviet Union always conclude that we have a constant, reliable ally in Cuba. The committee's chairman pointed out that we value Cuba's understanding of our problems now, during the transitional period in the development of our relations—transition in terms of form but not in terms of political essence.

Describing the political situation in the USSR, A.S. Dzasokhov said that "all forces in favor of perestroyka and socialism are currently consolidating around the president."

J. Escalona Reguera analyzed the situation in Cuba, singling out the course of rectifying the mistakes made in the economic sphere. In particular, he stressed the need to take a realistic view of the means of economic development, reinforcing the agrarian sector and abandoning the concept of artificially speeding up industrial programs. The guest also noted that certain political and state circles in a number of countries are trying to present Cuban society as static and incapable of development. At the same time, the delegation head said that major transformations are being implemented in Cuba both in politics, and in the economy, and in the social sphere.

J. Escalona Reguera said that the future of the Cuban revolution has not been thrown into question despite all the quests for renewal. Socialism in our country is irreversible, he concluded.

Holds News Conference

PY2802024091 Moscow in Spanish to Latin America 2300 GMT 26 Feb 91

[Viktor Kuzmin commentary on news conference held by Juan Escalona Reguera, head of a delegation from Cuba's National Assembly of the People's Government visiting the USSR, in Moscow; date not given]

[Text] The news conference was dedicated to the results of the visit. I would like to recall that the Cuban legislators arrived in the USSR on 19 February. During their stay they have held several meetings with their Soviet counterparts. This is what Comrade Juan Escalona, chairman of Cuba's National Assembly of the People's Government, said:

[Begin recording] We have had a pleasant, happy stay in Moscow. We held long meetings with an important group of Soviet leaders. We want to express our satisfaction at the results of our visit. [end recording]

Later, reporters asked Comrade Escalona about the ongoing processes in our country as well as in Cuba that have affected our economic and trade relations and have fueled speculation.

[Begin Escalona recording] The current difficulties in the Soviet Union provoked a difficult situation for our country last year, particularly during the second half of the year when the Soviet Union reduced its oil supply (?to) a little less than 3 million tons. Despite this situation, we signed new agreements for 1991 on 29 December. In them, the two countries determined the new type of relations, new prices, payments, etc. The delay in signing the agreement resulted in delivery delays for basic products for our country's economy. But, in each of our meetings with Soviet leaders, they conveyed their willingness to speed up implementation of these agreements and to sponsor the signing of agreements with the organizations in charge of [word indistinct]. [end recording]

Escalona Interviewed

PY2502120291 Moscow in Spanish to Cuba 0130 GMT 22 Feb 91

[Exclusive interview with Juan Escalona Reguera, president of the Cuban National Assembly of the People's Power, by Viktor Kuzmin in Moscow; date not given]

[Text] [Kuzmin] Comrade President, what are the main issues to be discussed by the delegation of the Cuban National Assembly of the People's Power, which you head, during its visit to the USSR?

[Escalona] [words indistinct] with five different Soviet legislative committees. The invitation to the Cuban National Assembly was planned [words indistinct] to exchange experiences, and to learn about the things we need, especially because the entire country is aware of the call made by the Fourth CPSU Congress. We were invited, heading a committee that is studying ways to improve our government system, our government structure, and the people's participation in the tasks of our national, provincial, and municipal assemblies. We came to become familiar with the Soviet experience. The Soviets have carried out profound changes in a very short time. [words indistinct] the changes made in the Soviet Government structure, in the presidential structure, in the Council of Ministers, in the cabinet. This is an experience in a country [words indistinct] within the framework of socialism which is obviously for us [words indistinct]. The meetings we held with high Soviet Government leaders [words indistinct], with the president of the Supreme Soviet, and with other Soviet Government officials have been, for me, very important and very enjoyable.

[Kuzmin] [words indistinct] there are very close relations between Soviet deputies and members of the Cuban National Assembly of the People's Power. What aspects of the works being carried out by Soviet deputies interest you most?

[Escalona] Learning about the Soviet experience [words indistinct] and to eradicate [words indistinct] in all its aspects. We had Soviet deputies in our [words indistinct], educational, and foreign relations committees. When we get home we will evaluate the formation of a Soviet-Cuban parliamentary group that will become a new link for closer relations. There are plans for several visits [words indistinct] of Soviet deputies to get to know our country, not just through our history which many times has been distorted. There is another reason [words indistinct] a new group of 80 youngsters from Chernobyl came to Cuba two days ago for medical treatment. We frequently get visits from Soviet veterans of the Afghan war who also come to get medical treatment in our hospitals. This is one more reason for our close relations with the Soviet Union. Therefore, I believe no one doubts that this relationship will continue to be strengthened. Despite [words indistinct] the problems that the Soviet Union is facing, which is being reflected in our trade relations [words indistinct]. But we understand the situation and are confident that Soviet communists will overcome the problems and move on [words indistinct] to see the Soviet Union the way we used to through the solution of its problems.

[Kuzmin] Comrade President, what role does the Cuban National Assembly of the People's Power now have?

[Escalona] We have to admit that there have been shortcomings—formalism, passivism—in the 14 years of our assembly's existence. As I told you at the beginning, we are working toward transforming our assembly into a true, real complement for the government's activities, toward securing more popular participation in the decisions of our assembly, and toward more participation by the electorate in improving our legislation. Of course, I have to emphasize the importance of the work of the assembly's permanent committees.

In October, we will have a new election period in Cuba. We have to elect all the delegates and deputies to the various assemblies of people's power in Cuba. This visit to the Soviet Union will help us accelerate the transformation process. In view of the work being done by the mission I lead, we believe legislative transformations will be possible, including modifications and changes in our constitution. The idea is to bring about all these transformations by working hand in hand with our people and (?the world) [words indistinct]. During the discussion on calling the congress, nearly a million proposals on 500 specific issues for debate were presented. Since we did not want to restrict the discussion to party militants, everyone was allowed to participate; not just the majority, but also the minority and even isolated opinions were carefully heard.

We have a score of proposals but the question of whether we will move toward a multiparty system is not raised in any of them. That question will not be debated, although some intellectual individuals who are concerned about the winds blowing abroad may say that it will. We are going to promote the transformations our people demand, the transformations that will benefit our people, and we do not intend to make any concessions nor make any decisions to please outsiders who us to seek solutions other than those rooted in our history and principles. We are not interested in the approval of outsiders, of the neighbor to the north; we are interested in gaining the recognition of our people, whose aspirations will be satisfied by our hard work.

[Kuzmin] We would like your opinion on the prospects and possibilities for cooperation between our two countries.

[Escalona] Well, for more than 30 years our relations have developed on a solid basis around economic and political ties, technical assistance, and the agreements that were recently signed between the Governments of Cuba and the Soviet Union. These relations should continue. We hope that the difficulties now confronting the Soviet people will not stand in the way of these fruitful relations.

[Kuzmin] Thank you. I believe it is not just happenstance that you will place a wreath on the mausoleum of Vladimir Ilich Lenin and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on the eve of 23 February, anniversary of the creation of the Soviet Army.

[Escalona] Yes, our delegation (?is also made up) of active duty Armed Forces officers [words indistinct] on military activities. I worked for many years with Soviet military advisers on development and improvement of the Cuban Armed Forces. I have a great deal of respect for Soviet officers, for all officers who represent this country and who are working for socialism in the Soviet Union. Therefore, this is an appropriate time to greet the generals and all the officers of the Soviet Armed Forces. We cannot go through Moscow without rendering our humble homage to the founder of this land, Vladimir Ilich Lenin.

[Kuzmin] One last question: How do you feel about your latest visit to Moscow? I know you have visited several world capitals, but what does this visit to the Soviet capital mean to you, personally?

[Escalona] Every time I visit the Soviet capital I am filled with emotion. For those of us who come from a temperature of 18 to 20 degrees centigrade, the Soviet Union is very cold now, but when we get inside the buildings, we feel the warm temperature [words indistinct]. Of course, we feel a warmth that is the result [words indistinct], and I hope it will be like that for a long time.

[Kuzmin] Thank you very much for this interview, Comrade President.

Supreme Soviet

20 February Proceedings Reported

LD2002105191

Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian at 0900 GMT on 20 February replaces its scheduled "Television News Service" program with a 41-minute unscheduled edition of the "At the USSR Supreme Soviet" program which comprises recorded excerpts of the 20 February morning proceedings at the USSR Supreme Soviet in the Kremlin in Moscow.

All the speeches covered in this program deal with Russian President Yeltsin's 19 February interview with Soviet television filed as second ref.

The program opens with Deputy Lemesheva condemning Yeltsin's remarks.

At 0902 GMT, Deputy Yusupov assesses Yeltsin's interview as irresponsible. He asks that the Soviet legislature issue a statement on this.

Deputy Smailova follows with comments on the deterioration of life in the Soviet Union. This calls for discipline and order in the country. The Soviet Union must remain a single country, she concludes.

Lukyanov, who is seen chairing the session, then calls on Smailova to conclude her remarks and reminds all to stick to their time limit.

An unidentified deputy proposes getting the two leaders together to sort things out. He draws a parallel with the bloodshed that has been so evident in the transcaucasus.

At 0910 GMT, Deputy Panchenka, a communist and a member of the women's committee, takes the floor to complain about Yeltsin stirring things up. She asks Yeltsin which of his two personae is to be trusted, which is his real one. She challenges the view that Armenians need necessarily be against Azerbaijanis, or any ethnic group against any other. She calls on women to rise up and seize power for themselves. Women of the Soviet Union must go on the attack and put their menfolk in their places.

Deputy Kustarev, a Russian, believes that up until yesterday there had been the hope that a point of contact could be found.

Deputy Umarkhodzhayev then takes the floor saying the deputies cannot stand aloof and remain indifferent to what is going on. Yesterday's appearance on television by Yeltsin just goes to show the contradictions between the republics and the center. A roundtable meeting of all republican leaders must be forthcoming. The Supreme Soviet must not remain a mere bystander.

At 0920 GMT, Deputy Azarov, a veteran, says people are perplexed and worried about the confrontation in the country, particularly because the source of this confrontation is Yeltsin. Yeltsin's statement against all and sundry is unacceptable. We have nothing to gain from any foreigners, as we veterans know well. Only through our own efforts can we solve our problems. Yeltsin's recent Baltic statements were an act of treachery.

Deputy Mamedov expresses grief over Yeltsin's TV appearance. Unity and trust are the most important thing, and when attempts are made to justify Filshin's mistakes, then it can only be viewed as antipeople. Yeltsin and Aliyev are in the same boat, and that is particularly worrying. He calls on the people to rally around the Russian people.

Deputy Sharipov wonders aloud what ambition can lead a man to do. Yeltsin's economic promises have cruelly deceived the people. We must call on the Russian legislature and people and on the Soviet legislature to put an end to this sort of thing. The trouble is that many other republican leaders are going down the same road as Yeltsin.

Then Comrade Denisov says we should not stoke up passions. Instead, we should merely ask the Russian legislature to voice its attitude to the Yeltsin interview. That should suffice.

Deputy Fomenko says the fate of our Union and the welfare and lives of millions of people have been placed on the line by this interview. It is political ambition on the part of Yeltsin rather than the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Supreme Soviet as a whole that has led to this. She is sure that the RSFSR Supreme Soviet did not empower Yeltsin to act thus. Nobody asked the Russian People whether they are prepared to see the disintegration of the country and of socialism and the restoration of a bourgeois state. Yet that is what Yeltsin is dragging us toward. In a very difficult position, the Supreme Soviet is seeking ways to resolve the problems, sometimes painful ways. Yesterday Comrade Koltsov broached the subject of a military coup, yet essentially what Yeltsin is doing is tantamount to this.

Deputy Chekhoyev from South Ossetia says yesterday's interview was essentially a declaration of civil war. If we want order in the country and unity in the country, then everything must be talked through. He calls for the Supreme Soviet to pass a resolution on the matter.

At 0938 GMT, Lukyanov reads out a few notes and proposals—particularly on the dignity of the president—from deputies. Lukyanov proposes that the deputies who have spoken should get together and draw up some document, perhaps a resolution, as Chekhoyev has suggested. After lunch we will then discuss the document, Lukyanov says. The program ends at 0941 GMT

26 February Proceedings Reported

LD2602214491

Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian at 1847 GMT on 26 February begins recorded

coverage of the USSR Supreme Soviet session on 26 February in Moscow. The announcer introduces the program, noting that the Council of the Union is discussing a bill on enterprise.

First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Makarevich Velichko, speaking for the government, says enterprise is a prerequisite for improving the Soviet economy. a law being developed on enterprise will leave details to the republic's discretion, he says. The first task in formulating the law is to define enterprise. Enterprise, Velichko says, is actively showing initiative by citizens. Entrepreneurs must meet their obligations in addition to enjoying the benefits of their enterprise.

At 1901 GMT, Belorussian Deputy Nikolay Bobritskiy says society is not ready for innovative economic methods. Enterprise, however, will create a sector of people who support democracy, as well as creating revenue for the state. Experience elsewhere, he says, shows that enterprising economic activity can better peoples' lot.

Bobritskiy concludes by declaring he favors holding companies and joint-stock companies, arguing for state assistance for ecological and agricultural firms.

At 1911 GMT, Leasing Implementation Monitoring Subcommittee Chairman Pavel Bunich says the Union law is a step forward from the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic law. He says the law does not mean that shareholders lack responsibilities.

At 1915 GMT, an unidentified deputy asserts that much waste is produced by industry's irresponsible use of natural resources. He says the enterprise law will help the unemployed launch their own businesses.

Next, another unidentified deputy speaks in the name of the committee on youth. The committee, he says, is concerned with the use of hired labor. The committee decided people would choose work as hired labor, if given the proper conditions.

Discussion of the enterprise bill continues until 1927 GMT, when the bill is adopted on first reading.

At 1931 GMT, the recording moves to the Council of Nationalities. The announcer says the same enterprise bill is under discussion. Fifteen deputies spoke on the legislation, the announcer says.

One unidentified deputy says exploitation occurs only when conditions make it inevitable, and argues for a variety of economic activity. Another unidentified deputy says entrepreneurs must make arrangements for housing workers. Conditions in state and private enterprises should be equal.

Deputies continue to speak, addressing various concerns, including conflicts of interest when rayon or soviet officials hold private positions, the need for a law on noncommercial activity, and possible stratification of society.

At 1945 GMT, a majority of deputies recommended adopting the law at its first reading. The announcer says USSR Supreme Soviet will meet in separate sessions on 27 February. The recording ends.

Pugo Issues Report on South Ossetia Situation

PM2802121191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Feb 91 Union Edition p 1

[Extract "From IZVESTIYA Legislative Correspondents' Report": "Situation in South Ossetia"]

[Text] At the end of the USSR Supreme Soviet evening sitting 25 February deputies heard a report from B. Pugo, USSR minister of internal affairs, on the situation in South Ossetia.

The minister said that the USSR Supreme Soviet resolution on South Ossetia adopted recently is still not being carried out. There are still a considerable number of illegal armed formations in the conflict zone with a large quantity of weapons and munitions in their possession. Both sides are vigorously stockpiling arms and increasing self-defense detachments. The result is that the confrontation between the sides is continuing. Neither side is making concessions.

Four people died and eight were wounded, Pugo, said, 24 February in the village of Avnevi as a result of an armed attack by unidentified persons. They were all Georgian nationals. Two bodies of Georgians with firearms wounds were discovered in a "Zhiguli" in a population center nearby. Seven firearms, five grenades, and two rockets were confiscated at the scene of the incident. Operational investigation measures are being carried out. On the same day Georgian militia personnel and armed civilians in one village checked a motorized convoy carrying economic freight escorted by a troop detail. Munitions were found in some vehicles. This was used an excuse to take 30 Ossetians hostage. The rayon commandant reported that the Ossetian side has also taken two groups of five and 12 Georgians hostage. Some hostages have been released as a result of steps taken.

The USSR minister of internal affairs also said that the blockade of South Ossetia is continuing. This has already resulted in the complete shutdown of industrial enterprises in the oblast. The work of public health and educational establishments has been paralyzed. According to the Georgian leadership, the oblast's electricity supply was restored 25 February. But the oblast is still not receiving electricity owing to numerous cases of damage on the line.

The number of refugees is increasing. According to North Ossetian MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] data, there are roughly 4,000 of them in the republic, more than 2,000 of whom are children.

Some 33 people have died since the conflict began in South Ossetia—14 Ossetians and 19 Georgians—while 145 people have been injured.

Pugo spoke about the steps being taken by the USSR MVD to stabilize the situation. Internal troops and Soviet Army servicemen have distributed food and fuel to the population and are guarding motorized convoys. Mobile generators have been sent into the oblast. Patrols and roadblocks have been stepped up. Some 329 people have been arrested for breaching the curfew, 147 firearms have been confiscated, and 62 criminal cases are under investigation.

At the same time, the USSR minister of internal affairs noted that the USSR MVD troops' chances of stabilizing the situation are limited. A state of emergency is only in effect in Tskhinvali. Pugo voiced the opinion that the situation that has taken shape in the region can only be resolved through talks. He said that a sitting of the Georgian Supreme Soviet session is to take place 26 February at which the situation in South Ossetia, including the USSR Supreme Soviet resolution, will be examined, and he instructed deputies to wait for the results of this sitting.

The results of this sitting of the Georgian legislature are indeed of great significance not only for the republic but also, we think, for the whole country. After all, if the Georgian Supreme Soviet does not adopt constructive decisions designed to normalize the situation in South Ossetia, A. Lukyanov informed deputies that the USSR president has the right to submit for consideration by the USSR Supreme Soviet a proposal to introduce a state of emergency on the oblast's territory without the agreement of the republic government. A two-thirds majority vote will be needed to adopt the decision.

Political & Social

Soviet Miners Plan, Stage Strike 1 March

Miners Split on Strike Plan

PM2802143991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Second Edition p 4

[Correspondent B. Glotov report under the rubric "Alarming Situation": "To Strike Or Not To Strike?"]

[Text] Donetsk--The regional union of Donbass strike committees held a sitting in Donetsk. Representatives from 32 mining cities in the republic gathered here to decide whether or not to begin a strike.

The point is that Donbass miners have demanded that the republic government, which now has jurisdiction over the coal sector by decision of the Ukrainian SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet, increase their wages by 100-150 percent and satisfy their demands with regard to pensions. V. Fokin, chairman of the Ukrainian SSR Council of Ministers, declared at talks in Kiev that the republic is presently unable to meet the miners' demands, as more than 1 billion rubles would be required for these purposes. Therefore, he said, the request to resolve this question must be put to the union government.

"The circle has been closed!... We propose to hold a 24-hour warning strike 1 March," M. Krylov, cochairman of the "Donetskugol" Association's strike committee, said. "And 10 days later, if our demands have not been met, we must 'lie down side by side in the squares,' until victory."

During the discussion many speakers supported this proposal unconditionally. However, there were other opinions too. Emissaries from the "Stakhanovugol" Association in Lugansk Oblast, representing approximately 50,000 miners, came out unequivocally against the strike. Other miners who addressed the session warned that the intended strike is premature.

Two proposals were voted on: To strike "to the hilt" at once, as of 1 March, or after an interval. Neither gained a majority of votes.

After this, passions in the hall were inflamed to the utmost. Yu. Boldyrev, member of the regional union of strike committees executive committee, who chaired the session, tried once more to put the proposal for a 24-hour preliminary strike to the vote, but people were no longer listening to him. Miners began leaving the hall.

Then M. Krylov stood up again. It was clear from what he said that the Donetsk Strike Committee reserves the right to urge the miners of "Donetskugol" Association to strike 1 March.

The final word belongs to the mining collectives, which will express their attitude to the strike in their enterprises.

No Money to Meet Miners' Demands

PM2802121991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Feb 91 Union Edition p 1

[INTERFAX report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, INTERFAX, SIBINFORM, REUTER, UPI roundup: "Miners Demand Raise, But There Is No Money"]

[Text] "The republic with its budgetary deficit of 15 billion rubles [R] has no money to meet the miners' demands," Viktor Gladush, deputy chairman of the Ukrainian Council of Ministers, said. The Donbass strike committees have demanded that their wages be increased by a factor of 2-2.5 and also that pension legislation be changed, and have threatened to strike as of 1 March if their demands are not met. The only means of obtaining the money is to introduce new taxes, but the deputy vice premier pointed out that this would be unfair to other categories of working people. Miners' wages are R90 higher than, for instance, metallurgists' wages, INTERFAX reported.

AFP: 'Tens of Thousands' on Strike

AU0103110291 Paris AFP in English 1026 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Moscow, March 1 (AFP)—Tens of thousands of Soviet coal-miners staged a one-day strike on Friday in support of demands ranging from better wages to nationalisation of communist party assets, strike committees reported across the country.

In the Ukrainian region of Donetsk, at least 120,000 miners downed tools or refused to load coal trains, strike committee coordinator Nikolay Volinka told AFP. During the telephone interview, Mr. Volinka was overheard exorting miners from another pit to join the stoppage, calling them "strike-breakers". [passage omitted]

In the polar region of Vorkuta, miners were still discussing Friday morning whether to go on strike, a strike committee spokesman said.

In the Siberian Karaganda field, a strike committee official said 21 out of 26 pits had joined the strike. Of these, 20 had stopped work altogether and one was simply refusing to load coal trains, he said. The Karaganda miners, who total 136,000, were calling for pay increases, compensation for price increases and "normal food supplies" for everyone in the region, the official said. The regional council of coal-miners had published a strike call in the Industralnaya Karaganda newspaper, INTERFAX said. The presidium of the regional Soviet, along with the Communist Party, used the same paper to appeal to workers not to strike. The Karaganda City Council, for its part, refused to allow miners to stage a demonstration in town.

In the Far East, miners were also to have to have joined the strike, Interfax reported, though details were unavailable.

Soviet miners staged a three-week-long nationwide strike in July- August 1989, the first such large-scale work stoppage in the Soviet Union.

Striking Miners Outline Demands

LD0103144791 Moscow TASS in English 1405 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—Only six out of 26 mines in the Karagandaugol production amalgamation, the Soviet Union's third largest coal producing basin, got down to work today.

Responding to a call by the Karaganda territorial council of the coal industry workers trade union and the regional workers' committee, miners staged a one-day strike.

Miners demand that a Union treaty be signed immediately on mutually beneficial conditions, wages be considerably raised and the taxation system changed. They said a republican law on indexing working people's incomes should be adopted, and compensation paid to the population for losses caused by price hikes, basing on the 1989 prices.

Valeriy Vnukovskiy, a member of the coordination strike council, told TASS that today workers began talks with representatives of the Kazakh Government and the Soviet Coal Industry Ministry.

"We hope that miners' demands will be fully discussed and a constructive dialogue will lead to working out a programme for resolving working people's pressing problems", he said.

Miners in Donetsk, southeastern Ukraine, partially supported the strike committee's call. All mines in the Donetskugol production amalgamation today continued producing coal, but they stopped delivering it to depots.

Most mines in Donetsk region continued work today. Only several mines in Krasnoarmeisk and Makeyevka completely ceased work.

Legislature Applauds Working Miners

LD0103144891 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] The news that the overwhelming majority of mines in the Donbass were today continuing normal work was greeted with friendly applause by parliamentarians in the Ukraine, who are, as you know, working in Kiev.

Kravchuk, chairman of the republic's supreme soviet, voiced gratitude on behalf of them to the Donbas miners for their high civic awareness and the well-weighed nature of their decisions.

Federation Council Work on Union Treaty

PM2702112591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Feb 91 Union Edition p 2

[Interview with G. Tarazevich, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Soviet of Nationalities Commission for Nationalities Policy and Interethnic Relations, by G. Shipitko under the "Events and Comments" rubric; date and place not given: "Making Your Decision"]

[Text] As has already been reported in IZVESTIYA, a sitting of the Council of the Federation reached agreement on appointing authorized representatives of republics who are to start a detailed elaboration of the articles of the draft Union Treaty, giving consideration to the proposals and observations made. Representatives of 24 subjects of the federation participated in the first sitting, as well as a working group from the Council of the Federation, scientific experts, and representatives of union ministries and departments.

[Shipitko] What were the results of the sitting?

[Tarazevich] Essentially, this is the second phase in the elaboration of the new Union Treaty. And it was preceded by consultations between representatives of the republics last summer at which the treaty drafting principles and ideology were determined. On the basis of proposals from republics, public organizations, scientific collectives, deputies' groups, and consultations at the Council of the Federation, a draft Union Treaty was in fact elaborated, which was published in the press. Being called "presidential," it initially came up against a critical reaction from the republics although, as I have already said, it was partly based on proposals from the republics themselves.

The first few hours of work by the republics' authorized representatives bore the signs more than anything of a certain mistrust of the center, which is supposedly trying to preserve the former state structure against the will of the republics. However, when direct work on the articles of the treaty started, there were not very many fundamental objections. And five basic articles concerning the structure of our Union were discussed and adopted. They were the demarcation of powers in the Union, the republics' participation in implementing the Union's power, ownership, taxes and duties, and mutual relations between republic and union laws. It stands to reason that the individual articles sound different today. However, the point is that it turns out that, given the wish and desire to reach an agreement, it is always possible to reach accord on the basis of common interests.

[Shipitko] Quite a long period of time has gone by between the first and second phases of work on the treaty. During that time there have also been changes in attitudes to it. The attitude has changed from a critical and distrustful one to a constructive one, from what you say.

[Tarazevich] All is not going so smoothly in reality. There were extreme judgments and viewpoints and heated discussions which then led to conflict between various interests. And in the end the same articles appeared or, to put it more accurately, the same ones, but containing more specific things and meeting everybody's interests. As for the long time between the first and second phases, it is primarily due to the actual nature of the document: After all, it determines the whole basis of our state system. You will agree that these are fundamental principles under which our whole society and all Soviet people have to live. And haste is hardly justified here, as its consequences could be unpredictable.

It must be noted that the people who were opposed to the draft from the very beginning unfortunately did not participate in our work. This means the Baltic republics. The Transcaucasus and Moldova are working out their attitude to the treaty. One of the reasons is the complex political situation in these regions. But now is a time in our country when outdated relations in society are breaking down and when negation is being replaced by the need for creative work. And what is happening could be described in the concept of a "triumph of reason."

[Shipitko] I would like to hear some specific examples.

[Tarazevich] The attitude of the Russian legislature to the formation of the Union budget is well known. It proposed a single channel system whereby deductions from the income of enterprises and organizations only go into the republic budget. And then the republic makes deductions into the Union fund. This is an unreliable financial system which would determine a corresponding statewide policy and the world community's attitude to us. As a result of the exchange of opinions, the Russian representative's position has changed. And now Article 8 of the new wording also envisages Union taxes, but "their level is to be determined on the basis of coordination with the republics."

However, essentially there were wide debates and heated arguments on all the articles, and only five were discussed, as I recall. It took us a long time to reach a common opinion on ownership or, to be more precise, on whether there should be just state ownership, or republic ownership too. However, the desire to reach accord on this basic article enabled us to elaborate a formula acceptable to everyone. As a result the main body of the wording of Article 7 is now as follows: "Republics are the owners of the land, the minerals, and other natural resources on their territory, as well as state property except for the part belonging to the Union on a treaty basis for the implementation of powers with which it has been entrusted."

[Shipitko] But it was the attitude toward ownership that previously provoked the most heated disputes and objections, and harsh and in many ways fair criticism from the center...

[Tarazevich] I would turn attention to two aspects of the work on the Union treaty. We are now quite convinced that we can reach agreements on even the most complex questions. It is important to find principles that would suit if not all, then at any rate the majority of authorized representatives. And they involve harmonizing the interests of everyone who will make up the Union.

[Shipitko] I recall that during the discussion of the structure of the future Union it was clearly stated that republics will hand over to the center the powers that they consider it necessary to hand over. And now something rather different can be observed: Each republic is delegating an equal number of rights to the center. Or am I wrong?

[Tarazevich] Indeed, at the very beginning of the meeting such viewpoints were expressed. But having determined your sovereignty, you cannot ignore other people's rights to sovereignty. Here there must be common methods, and they must constitute the basis of the future Union. And we managed to realize this idea in the vote for the articles in the treaty.

[Shipitko] It seems that I would not be mistaken in suggesting that working out common positions on the treaty will also enable us, to a significant degree, to determine the attitude to the upcoming referendum. After all, there is an obvious link here...

[Tarazevich] Of course. When people go to the referendum they must have a picture of what the Union will look like. The work of the authorized representatives of the republics or, to be more precise, the given phase of their meeting answers this question. All the same, it will be a federation in which the republics will transfer some of their powers to the center.

[Shipitko] We cannot fail to pay attention to the fact that our assessments are based to a significant degree on the results of the first meeting. Their overall tone is a belief in positive changes. But you cannot deny that quite different processes are going on in republics and in many regions today. A simple list is enough to give a general picture of this: Nagorno-Karabakh, Moldova, the Baltic republics, and the Transcaucasus. Finally, the formation of individual armed national forces is taking place, which does not tie in at all with the idea of the Union as a federative state.

[Tarazevich] But it is today's formulation of the principles of a Union structure that convinces us that these processes must acquire different forms. For instance, a clear demarcation of powers is envisaged in the articles that have been agreed and signed. They also concern principles of the competence of each of the sides that form part of the Union. Questions of the organization of defense and the leadership of the Armed Forces, the border guard troops, and defense enterprises come exclusively under Union authority. But the determination of state security and defense strategies, the deployment and activity of troops, the draft, and the performance of [military] service come under joint authority. The creation of special republic formations is not envisaged—as the republics' representatives determined.

[Shipitko] Undoubtedly you can draw such conclusions on the basis of harmonized interests. But today's reality is different...

[Tarazevich] I understand the essence of your question. It was quite easy to phrase the article this way because the republics that have such problems did not participate in our work. And you cannot fail to notice this. But if they bring themselves into line with the treaty and sign it, then those republics will have to carry out the conditions of the treaty.

[Shipitko] And if they do not?

[Tarazevich] Then there are two possible options. We could conclude a special agreement on individual positions of the Union Treaty, if the other participants in the treaty agree to it. However, if a republic does not agree to become part of the Union on any terms, then the whole procedure for withdrawal from the Union will come into force according to the adopted law. No third option is given.

[Shipitko] To my mind there are higher forms of responsibility for what what used to exist in our state. For instance, you cannot by a simple action decide the fates of tens of millions of people who live outside their national state formations or have none. Both the Union and each individual republic with representatives living in other areas of the country bear responsibility for this.

[Tarazevich] All this is envisaged in the law on secession from the Union. First of all, it is necessary to solve all the humanitarian problems and problems common to all mankind that will be involved in resettling people from one territory to another in the event of a particular republic's secession from the USSR. And to take part in deciding the fate of citizens so that their interests are not violated. If the people themselves want that, of course.

[Shipitko] And yet the current phase of work on the treaty seems more like a leap in the dark. In any case, that is the impression I have gained from our conversation.

[Tarazevich] I can agree with you, since we are building a new Union and new relations in society. We are only giving a broad outline of all we want to achieve. It is clear that a union of sovereign republics would be to everyone's advantage. But it is convenient to resolve some problems together and others independently. And only the treaty process, which is now going on, can clarify what the Union should look like.

[Shipitko] And how do you see subsequent phases in the work on the treaty?

[Tarazevich] We have now gone through Articles 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. This is a small part of the work ahead. But I repeat, the most important and fundamental part. Our work will continue this week; then, if accord is achieved on all the articles of the treaty, it will be sent out to the republic parliaments; and only then will we be able to talk about the final phase of signing the treaty.

[Shipitko] So by all accounts you have an optimistic view of our future Union?

[Tarazevich] I am optimistic, but obviously with moderation. And I think that we have ahead of us a very complex and lengthy process of harmonizing positions.

[Shipitko] This is a question of harmonizing not just national interests but primarily the interests of the various political groups, parties, and finally, the CPSU, which will affect the whole treaty process. And we cannot fail to take this into account: The CPSU was, is, and will clearly continue to be for a long time the dominant force in our society's political life.

[Tarazevich] I agree that the treaty process means first and foremost harmonizing the interests not just of the republics but also of the political forces that are actually

present in our society. Naturally they affect the content of the treaty. And this means not just the CPSU, but all political forces that exist. However, this is nevertheless an indirect and not a direct process, although it cannot fail to express itself in positions and struggles. And we have to bear this in mind. But this is a normal process and it should not be dramatized. As we know, economics is impossible without politics. And now different, fundamentally new relations in the political sphere and in the sphere of our state system are being set up. And it is with an awareness of this that we must embark the path of creating a renewed Union.

Kravchenko on Future of Russian Television

LD2702223491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1330 GMT 26 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow, 26 Feb (TASS)—Leonid Kravchenko, chairman of the All-Union State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company, has commented on republican television studios' aspirations of independence from Central Television (CT). In an interview for the 'PRAVITELSTVENNIY VESTNIK' [GOVERNMENT HERALD] weekly (Number 9) he talked in detail about the establishment of Russian television. The head of the union company pointed out a number of difficulties in this direction, noting in particular the problem of the Russian government in financing its own television company. According to Kravchenko, the Russian Federation's government proved unready for such functions. Leonid Kravchenko said that since the Russian television company, the establishment of which has been announced, does not as yet have anything at all, even depots, talks are under way about temporarily leaving the solution of all its problems up to Gosteleradio—construction, reconstruction, technical equipment, the supply of complete sets of equipment. The head of union television also thinks one cannot speak about division of property. "The television center constitutes a single indivisible electronic organism," he stressed.

At the same time, according to Leonid Kravchenko, over 70 percent of the total volume of broadcasting on all Central Television channels is broadcast for Russia and exclusively on Russian material. Commenting in this connection on the plans for organizing a separate Russian channel, he said that "this involves, essentially, creating a television which will have a particular political coloring."

Going on to explain the non-broadcast of a number of editions of the popular "Vzglyad" program, Leonid Kravchenko said: "It came about that a group of people was based at state television who consistently pursued a harsh opposition line with regard to the president and the USSR government, and monopolized use of state television in the interests of a specific political platform. The broadcasting of "Vzglyad" was halted until contract relations could be worked out, both with the presenters of the program and with all who work on the air."

Shenin Attends Communications Troops Conference

PM2802163991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Second Edition p 4

[TASS report under the rubric "Official": "Party Conference Held"]

[Text] Measures for the organizational-political strengthening of primary party organizations were discussed at a party conference of government communications troops [voyska pravitelstvennoy svyazi].

The conference participants were addressed by O.S. Shenin, member of the Politburo and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. He answered delegates' questions concerning the decisions of the party Central Committee January (1991) plenum and the state of affairs in the party and the country, and also expounded the CPSU Central Committee's stance on urgent problems of the life of our society. The conference participants elected the party committee and adopted an appeal to party organizations and all Communists among the troops to resolve more effectively the tasks of combat readiness, of strengthening organization and discipline, and of rallying military collectives.

V.A. Ponomarev, deputy chairman of the USSR KGB, participated in the work of the conference.

Appeal for Participation in Referendum

LD2702203191 Moscow TASS in English 1754 GMT 27 Feb 91

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent Aleksey Petrunya]

[Text] Kiev February 27 TASS—The Central Committees of the Belorussian, Russian and Ukrainian communist parties issued a joint appeal, calling on communists and peoples of the Soviet Union to participate in the March 17 referendum on the USSR's future.

The joint appeal was circulated here today on the eve of a conference of central committees secretaries of union republics, which will be held in Kiev on Tuesday, February 28.

"We advocate a renovated union of equal and sovereign Soviet socialist republics, which will fully guarantee the human rights and freedoms of any nationality," the document says.

"Our multinational homeland is living through a critical time. The social, political and economic crisis has reached a dangerous point. Anti-socialist forces are seeking to change the country's state system and destroy the Soviet Union.

"Our country is a common home for many peoples, whose friendship and close cooperation are based on numerous economic, cultural and human relations.

"However, the truth about the past and the present of our country is drowned in the stream of slanders and concoctions fabricated by those who disguise themselves as 'democrats' and who misuse glasnost and pluralism, opposing the socialist choice and distorting the aims of perestroyka.

"Favouring a renovated union, the Belorussian, Russian and Ukrainian communist parties call on the parliaments and governments of their republics to be the first in signing a" union treaty, initiating the act of great confidence and wisdom at the most dramatic stage in the life of Soviet peoples," the appeal emphasises.

"We call on the citizens of all sovereign union republics, autonomous republics and regions and national areas to appraise the consequences of the referendum for their peoples, the peoples of the USSR and the entire world and vote in favour of the unity and preservation of the union of Soviet socialist republics," the document stresses.

Republic Opposition to Referendum Assailed

91UN0946A Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
21 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

[Report on interview with A. Chekhoyev, member of the USSR Supreme Soviet and cochairman of the deputy group Soyuz, by Ye. Sorokin; place and date not given: "Games Around the Referendum"]

[Text] **Here is a paradox of our life: At a time of democracy and glasnost, when everyone is trumpeting the welfare of the people, and appeals are being made to listen to their voice, there are enemies of the most democratic form of expression of the will of the people—the referendum. What is behind this? What aims are the enemies of a national vote pursuing? These and other PRAVDA questions are answered by A. Chekhoyev, a member of the USSR Supreme Soviet and cochairman of the deputy group Soyuz.**

[Sorokin] Anatoliy Grigoryevich, a referendum is absolutely unusual for our country. As far as I know, it will be conducted for the first time in our history. How would you assess the fact itself of conducting a referendum?

[Chekhoyev] Of course, this is the first referendum, but, perhaps, it might be worth conducting others on other questions also. Today's is special, if for no other reason than that the question raised in it is of extreme importance: whether our state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, is to be or not to be?

We were compelled at the fourth congress to raise this question, which was a result of strategic and tactical omissions of the Union parliament. Because, in fact, the collapse of the federation is taking place, and, moreover, what is significant, regardless of the will of the people.

Governments have been elected in some of the republics that speak on behalf of the people, but, in fact, they have no grounds for this. Doubt is raised about the very designation of our state, as a consequence of which even the word "socialist" has disappeared from the draft Union treaty. And the fact that social protection of the citizens and confidence in the future lies at the foundation of socialism—all of this has been forgotten.

The referendum is necessary for a number of other reasons as well. There are too many hot spots in the country, but the roots of the conflicts, as a rule, are not in the interethnic, but in the political layer. A parade of sovereignties and a war of laws have overwhelmed the Union. People have been placed under intolerable conditions, the kinds where a person is compelled to find his own protection, at times with the help of weapons. In this situation, a referendum must decide the question of what our state should be. Not that questionable poll that was conducted in Lithuania, but an actual referendum. Especially since I would like to see a person who in answer to the question of whether he would like to live in a free and sovereign republic would answer in the negative. What is surprising is that a little more than six percent of the population were found who wrote "no."

I am confident that the results of the referendum in Lithuania will be quite different from those after this "poll." You see, the people understand that without a Union there will be no future. For example, Georgia does not have its own energy or raw material resources. Many of the enterprises will have to be closed, if the republic secedes from the USSR structure. There already are problems there with fuel, heavy oil, and TETs [thermoelectric power station], and the electric power stations are not working. All of the talk about how we will be able to live without the Union is simply irresponsible.

[Sorokin] Nevertheless, Georgia has announced that it will not take part in the referendum.

[Chekhoyev] Very complicated processes are taking place there now. Naturally, it is necessary to treat with respect the growth of national self-consciousness. But it is intolerable when this healthy feeling grows into national egoism, and in some respects, into chauvinism and nationalism. This does not flatter any nation. Neither the Ossetians in Georgia, nor the Russians in Lithuania have any claims against the indigenous nations. The debate is about something else: Some want to live within the Union system, and others do not. Then under these conditions, how can there be a rejection of a referendum on the fate of the Union state?

[Sorokin] It is obvious that the referendum must be conducted. This is the decision of the higher organ of authority—the congress. But it is not only Georgia and Lithuania, but also Estonia and Latvia, and some other Union republics who do not want to hold it...

[Chekhoyev] I think that since we are still a single state, then the laws in it must be operative. If some republic places its laws above Union laws, then it must, at the very least, substantiate its decision and not appeal to the

UN. But, you will agree, it is difficult to substantiate preventing the people from expressing their will. So, all kinds of speculations arise.

In the first place, the referendum must ensure the free will of the people without fail. This is very important. Second, the people must understand what they are voting for, and what awaits them, if they, for example, vote against a renewed Union. For many destinies will be shattered, many tragedies will occur, and streams of migrants will gush from republic to republic! This will be a cataclysm on a world scale.

Only the governments of those republics that know very well that they do not express the opinion of their own people can be against this referendum. And our respected "democrats" play up to precisely these governments in every possible way. Their congress was held not long ago. They did not conceal the fact that the time of consensus and dialogues has passed. Their objective is to oppose the present government, to achieve the dissolution of all state structures, including the USSR Supreme Soviet, and to remove the president. They declare openly: It is a question of power.

The matter has gotten right down to cynical actions. The Soyuz group and the Moscow CPSU Gorkom [city party committee] came out with an initiative to hold a meeting on 23 February dedicated to the 73d anniversary of the Soviet Army. But the "democratic" forces are preparing actions against the Soviet Army on this very same day. All of this is very reminiscent of the atheistic measures that were undertaken not so many years ago on religious holidays and that were timed specifically to coincide with them.

[Sorokin] Nonetheless, what is to be done if one or another republic rejects the referendum?

[Chekhoyev] Well, first, it is necessary to conduct one more referendum: Whether the people of these republics want to participate in a referendum or not. But, second, this kind of a situation need not be feared. In the final analysis, we are doing a lot with caution. But our leaders, most of all the president, have a higher responsibility to the people, and it is laid down in his oath. He must evaluate the situation realistically. And if some kind of irreversible processes and conflicts arise in one or another republic or region, then this question comes up immediately: We gave the president so much authority and rights that it is time to ask of him why he, possessing practically unlimited power, did not avert these conflicts. Take a look at what is happening: Ukases are adopted—and half of the republics, if not the village soviets, countermand them on the spot.

I would like to see what the U.S. President would do if even one state opposed his will. But in our country this has become practically the rule.

[Sorokin] Let us assume that a referendum was held in all of the republics. It is recognized as valid, but, for example, in two or three republics the people answered "no" to the question that was put to them. How will events develop afterwards?

[Chekhoyev] Naturally, the governments of these republics will immediately raise the question of their secession from the USSR structure. At that time, another law will have to go into effect—on secession from the USSR. There will be a new referendum inside the republic, with the participation, as is stipulated in the law, of representatives of the center and of international organizations. That is, some law must still be in effect. I am confident that not one republic will secede from the USSR structure. But it is precisely this second referendum that the enemies of the first referendum fear most of all. For when the question is put point- blank—to be or not to be?—the answer will be unequivocally positive. And, consequently, an end will come to the political career of those who, to satisfy personal ambitions, forget about the welfare of the people.

No 'Transition of Power' from Communists

LD2702200791 Moscow World Service in English 1600 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Text] A senior Soviet Communist Party official has ruled out the transition of power from the communists to any other political forces as long as the country's Supreme Soviet, elected in a legal way, is in office.

A secretary of the Party Central Committee, Valentin Kuptsov, made this statement at a news conference in Moscow. He recalled that many of the newly-founded groups declared their opposition to the Communist Party in order to gain more prestige.

Kuptsov said that at the union level there were about 20 parties, and at the republican more than 500. There are 16 different blocs. Speaking about the new government still being formed, Kuptsov did not rule out that representatives of other parties may be invited into the cabinet provided they are good experts.

Kuptsov Says CPSU Ready for Mutiparty System

LD2702233191 Moscow TASS in English 2118 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow February 27 TASS—More than 500 political parties, including 20 with the all-union membership, are now fighting for influence in the USSR after the Soviet Communist Party, which ruled for over 70 years, gave up its legally recorded monopoly on power, CPSU Central Committee Secretary Valentin Kuptsov told a news conference here today.

Kuptsov stressed again that the CPSU is "ready to cooperate with any party, which does not deny the socialist choice." The Communist Party also declared its readiness to conduct a dialogue with opposition parties operating within the Constitution.

However, cooperation is hampered by the following peculiar feature in the present political situation in the USSR: Most of newly established parties and movements preach anti-communism.

The criticism of the CPSU on any occasion and negative attitude to its past and present activities are today a yardstick to measure the "democratic" nature of any organisation.

These parties link protests by the broad masses of people against economic difficulties with mistakes and even "crimes" of communists and use militant anti-communism, instead of action programmes, to rely on all the dissatisfied people.

In his policy-making speech at meeting with intellectuals in Minsk on Tuesday, Communist Party leader and president Mikhail Gorbachev heavily censured forces, calling themselves "democrats", for stepping up confrontation with communists and for unconstitutional methods of struggle for power.

Former Editor Critics Yefimov

PM2802125291 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English No 6, 10-17 Feb 91 p 9

[Text] The verbatim report [on the 30 January saff meeting at Izvestiya] left me amazed: can such things happen at IZVESTIYA where I had been a correspondent for almost two decades in the past? Back then Petr Alekseyev was the editor-in-chief, the person who decided the newspaper's course. He wanted ours to be "inspiring reporting". We complied, however, we had more disgust than inspiration. We had even coined a maxim: "Whatever our editor-in- chief dislikes, we hate."

But there was no mutiny back then. It is occurring only now: today at IZVESTIYA journalists are saying they have no confidence in their senior colleague Nikolai Yefimov and demand his resignation. He used to be credited for his liberal attitudes and very democratic ways of socializing with the staff. He even played on the IZVESTIYA soccer team. Has Yefimov changed? No, but the newspaper staff has changed, along with many other Soviets.

One cannot rationalize and say this conflict is due to Yefimov's character, because his real role is that of executor of his chief's will. Having had contact with him for many years, I always considered him a perfect illustration of a humorous adage: "Like editor, like deputy." Yefimov is a perfect deputy editor. This was his job under Tolkunov, who had returned to IZVESTIYA during Brezhnev's time. Yefimov could quickly understand Tolkunov's every idea as the latter tried to pull the newspaper out of the rut it had got stuck in. Later, occupying the post of the deputy head of the Ideology Department of the CPSU Central Committee, Yefimov keenly followed the change in attitude of his new chief, Medvedev. Yefimov artfully substantiated the inadmissibility of allowing any subscription to the Russian edition of MOSCOW NEWS. He ordered the destruction of an entire print-run of one MOSCOW NEWS issue that leaked news about shady dealings aimed at stopping Boris Yeltsin from being elected a People's Deputy.

The verbatim report reveals that Yefimov decided to sack his First Deputy after learning that the later had signed a Statement issued by the MOSCOW NEWS Board of Directors, condemning the crime perpetrated in Vilnius. It would be most appropriate here to deliberate about Yefimov's character traits and his categorical refusal to ever have a deputy who would dare voice a dissenting opinion. But this would somehow be detrimental to his portrait. In fact, the truth is more primitive and mean: Yefimov simply faithfully repeats on his level whatever happens at the top. Among the signatories of the Statement, was Academician Nikolai Petrakov, President Gorbachev's economic adviser. His chief sacked him the very day the newspaper hit the stands. Following suit, Yefimov decided to sack his First Deputy "Unwilling to go, the regime stoops to crime" was the title of the Statement. It dealt with a regime of bloodshed and lawlessness which allows people to be killed by armed forces that are used for selfish ends and ordered to storm a legally-elected parliament that was in session. It was aimed at a regime which we unanimously arose against in protest six years ago. Now Yefimov, speaking against his First Deputy, claims that he is ready to protect that regime. But why does he choose to commit this sin? A few days earlier, during the confirmation of the new Soviet Foreign Minister, the President indignantly spoke about the famous piece published in MOSCOW NEWS and said: "The regime first and foremost is Gorbachev himself."

I'm being so thorough about Yefimov here only to prove once again to myself something I already know: why such people are in such great demand nowadays, and why the Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet takes such great pains to keep the morally bankrupt Yefimov in his current post. And why he insists on Igor Golembiovskiy's quitting IZVESTIYA's Editorial Board?

Some people prefer not to see in all this a persecution of glasnost. All they see is a publisher's desire not to let the control over his newspaper slip from his hands. However, having voiced a step "a", a person is silly if he thinks that his listeners will not notice his logically ensuing point "b". Freedom ends where the press is kept under autocratic control. Because under such control all openness only gets buried. And when everything possible is being done to protect an unrespected and obsequious newspaper editor, the times are right for an end to glasnost.

Were Golembiovskiy an ultra radical or even an extremist, the attempt to fire him wouldn't be so shameful. A fine journalist and a conscientious individual, he simply wants to be responsible before the

people for whom the newspaper is published, rather than before those who publish it.

During the last couple of years, Yefimov advanced in his career amazingly quickly: from IZVESTIYA to the CPSU Central Committee, then to the State Committee of the USSR for Publishing, Printing and Book Trade, IZVESTIYA (this time as its Editor-in-Chief). But I wonder: why is this man in such great demand? The answer leaves room for hope: there is a dwindling number of obsequious people available. In fact, there's only one such person left on IZVESTIYA's Editorial Board—Yefimov himself.

In general, the situation would be perfect were Golembiovsky made IZVESTIYA'S Editor-in-Chief, and Yefimov his Deputy.

IZVESTIYA 30 Jan Staff Meeting Reported

PM2802124891 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English No 6, 10-17 Feb 91 pp 8-9

[Extracts from "transcript" of 30 January meeting between staff and chief editor of IZVESTIYA N. Yefimov, under the general headline "Glasnost Is Too Young To Retire!"; first three paragraphs are editorial introduction: "Anatoliy Ivanovich (Lukyanov) Makes a Pact With Nikolay Ivanovich (Yefimov)"]

[Text] "This is an attempt to disband the staff." This remark was heard at the staff meeting at IZVESTIYA on Wednesday, January 30. This meeting has caused a storm of rumours among journalists. Realizing that what is going on in IZVESTIYA, the country's major daily, is not merely a quarrel between its staff and its publisher and Editor-in-Chief, we print here some quotes from the transcript of the meeting, which runs to nearly a hundred pages.

But before we do that, we ought to explain that nine months ago the USSR Supreme Soviet announced its decision to appoint Nikolay Yefimov IZVESTIYA's editor-in-chief and Igor Golembiovskiy his first deputy—something unprecedented in Soviet journalism. Behind this decision was a drama played by the IZVESTIYA staff. When their Editor-in-Chief Ivan Laptev left, the staff democratically elected Golembiovskiy to succeed him. Some people at the top were no doubt not happy about the choice and how it was made. The staff and the publisher—the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet reached a compromise appointing Nikolai Yefimov IZVESTiYA's Editor-in-Chief. The latter had at one time worked for the newspaper. Golembiovskiy was made his deputy. If the Presidium had not appointed Golembiovskiy at that time, it would not have had to be directly involved (through a letter from Yefimov) in the drama to remove him.

Anatoliy DRUZENKO, Deputy Editor-in-Chief:

This was the first such meeting ever to be called to consider a staff change...I suggest we hear Igor Golembiovskiy, to dispel any rumors.

Igor GOLEMBIOUSKIY, First Deputy Editor-in-Chief:

On Monday evening (January 28) Nikolai Ivanovich Yefimov asked me to accept his offer to go to Spain as a correspondent. The next morning Anatoly Ivanovich Lukyanov asked me over to his office, and referred to a letter from IZVESTIYA. I went there at 10 a.m. The discussion lasted 40 minutes. The gist of it was that the IZVESTIYA Editor had suggested that I be sent to Spain as a correspondent...

I didn't accept the offer and said that since the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet had appointed me, it can either give me a new appointment or remove me on two conditions: it should be done openly, and in such a way that everyone can see that this is done against my will and my accord. Both Nikolay Ivanovich and Anatoliy Ivanovich agreed.

Irina OVCHINNIKOVA, special correspondent:
What kind of letter was it? We would like to hear about it, and why this offer?

GOLEMBIOVSKIY:
I didn't see the letter. But as far as I can see, the idea of me being sent to Spain came from the Editor-in-Chief. I do not know the precise wording. Anatoly Ivanovich said he had heard about the latest meeting at IZVESTIYA from different sources. After this meeting, Nikolai Ivanovich called Lukyanov saying either he would resign because of the reaction, or he would ask the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet for help in strengthening the newspaper's executive staff...

Nikolay YEFIMOV:
When I saw the letter in MOSCOW NEWS (MN No 3, 1991, the statement of the Board of Directors—MN) and my first deputy's signature I asked him: "Igor, how can we work together now? We will unwittingly pull in different directions. If you say in the newspaper that this criminal regime should fall, this means you would want the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet to be disbanded? I hold a different view. How can we cooperate holding such different views?" Neither Igor nor I could answer this question. The question pained me.

The last meeting added so many new questions that the following evening I asked Lukyanov to receive me. He was informed about the meeting and I didn't have to brief him...

OVCHINNIKOVA"
Did you tell Anatoliy Ivanovich about your position today?... What had happened in the newspaper before your appointment is no secret: we set out to elect our editor democratically and we did, unanimously—something that can happen among journalists once in a hundred years—a man we had worked with 25 years. We

elected Golembiovskiy. Did you explain to Lukyanov that we would protest Golembiovskiy's assignment to Spain?

YEFIMOV:
I proposed to Lukyanov what I proposed. I wrote him an ordinary routine letter.

Vasiliy ZAKHARKO, Executive Secretary:
At 2:15 I had a call from Ivan Dmitriyevich Laptev who said he was very worried over what happened in the newspaper. He was amazed to learn that Golembiovskiy was asked to leave his post. He said he just sent a letter to Yefimov. Will Nikolai Ivanovich read out the letter right now please.

YEFIMOV:
It was personal.

ZAKHARKO:
I made no mistake, Ivan Dmitriyevich said the letter was meant for the entire staff.

YEFIMOV:
I'm not going to read it. I can only give the gist. It is concerned with more than this problem. It does not concern us. I can say that Ivan Laptev thinks that Golembiouskiy should stay.

ZAKHARKO:
This is a request from a person we all respect, the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Chamber, the newspaper's former Editor-in-Chief. Can we decline his request and refuse to read out the letter to the staff?

YEFIMOV:
I'm not going to read the whole letter.

DRUZENKO:
I suggest that someone call Laptev to find out what he thinks.

Edvin POLYANOVSKIY, special correspondent:
Yes, let someone called Laptev...If Yefimov reads us only part of the letter, he can read whatever he thinks fit.

YEFIMOV:
There's one passage I won't read. It does not concern us. I will read what he said about Golembiovskiy (he reads an item).

Vladimir KURASOV special correspondent:
A natural question: Nikolai Ivanovich, did your position change because of the letter? Or...are you still decided that Golembiovskiy leave for Spain and we stay and roll up our sleeves to work on with renewed vigor? What's your answer?

YEFIMOV:
I got the letter at about three. I've not had time to send a reply.

Igor ABAKUMOV, a department deputy head:
I've just talked to the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet Chamber, Laptev. He said that the last lines in the letter are as folows (he reads). The letter has not been read out in full. I think we must hear it in full after all.

YEFIMOV:
The letter is addressed to me. I've read all that concerns me...

ABAKUMOV:
The chairman of the Supreme Soviet Chamber asked to have the letter read out.

YEFIMOV:
The letter is not signed "Chairman" but "Laptev". It is addressed to me personally.

(The contents of the letter is known to MN: Laptev says that Yefimov is wrong in keeping Golembiovskiy's dismissal a secret from him, a former IZVESTIYA Editor-in-Chief and a man who monitors it today. Getting rid of Golembiovskiy, he writes, could have an unpredictable impact on the performance of the staff and ruin the paper. This way of dealing with problems clashes with the norms of today's life and adds grist to the mill of those who think the President has launched an offensive against glasnost.)

ABAKUMOV:
So we haven't heard the contents of the letter after all.

POLYANOVSKIY:
Nikolay Ivanovich, are you ready to confirm here and now that you are prepared to leave? Personally, I like you very much, but I would suggest that the staff give you a vote of non-confidence. Besides, in order that the Presidium not be put in an awkward position, the staff should not nominate only Golembiovskiy. Instead we should give a vote of confidence to the two persons we know: Ivan Laptev—if he may find it possible to come back—and to Golembiovskiy who got his appointment nine months ago.

Vikentiy MATVEYEV, political analyst:
I would like to appeal to your sense of realism: we couldn't possible have a better (better than today—MN) Editor-in-Chief...

Lev KORNESHOV, deputy editor-in-chief:
I think that the document sent to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet about Golembiovskiy's recall and his transfer to Spain as a correspondent is invalid. Such matters would be dealt with by the paper's Board of Editors. As a member of the Board, I did not know anything about this decision, and no one sought my advice. As far as I know, the opinions of other members were not sought either. Hence, this is Comrade Yefimov's personal opinion... I'm convinced that Comrade Golembiovskiy should remain the First Deputy Editor-in- Chief. What I ought to say and what is hardest of all to say is this. The reputation of the newspaper's Editor-in-Chief has plunged catastrophically due to a number of mistakes he has made and due to a number of circumstances he has proved unequal to. More. The Editor-in-Chief has lost control of the Board of Editors and the

staff. I trust he will not take this personally, but I feel that Nikolai Ivanovich ought to resign.

Yuriy ORLIK, mail department:
The attempt to sack Golembiovskiy is tantamount to an attempt to disband the staff or a sure attempt to pressure IZVESTIYA info changing its position. It is plain to me, as it is to most of those present, that Golembiovskiy will be only the first. Let's not allow something to happen today that we'll be ashamed of tomorrow.

Yuriy MAKAROV, topical satire desk:
I think some people just don't realize it but the war is on, the first shot has been fired. Members of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet are being polled about sacking Golembiovskiy. The most important thing is that the polling is now over.

(MN: Several hours before the IZVESTIYA meeting, voting had been started at the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet to sack Golembiovskiy. The planned procedure was to consist of a quick question period while certain members were absent. The first who objected to this was Academician Yuri Ryzhov, Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Committee. He called the former IZVESTIYA Editor-in- Chief Ivan Laptev who was not aware of the polling. On Laptev's insistence, the issue of Golembiovskiy's dismissal will be heard during the session of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet on February 7.)

Andrey ILLESH, news desk:
I am not sorry for Nikolai Ivanovich in this situation. I am sorry more for the newspaper. We shall arrive at a decision after all. I suggest it be published in IZVESTIYA. I think we are up to the challenge of nominating Golembiovskiy as Editor-in-Chief. This would give us a rallying point. We would be able to work together in spite of differences. Otherwise, we will see dead bodies being carried out through the back door one by one.

YEFIMOV:
Comrades, I ought to leave you. I've made my decision. You will learn it. It may prove unexpected to you. Give me time to think everything over. I can't listen to this any more.

Marina LEBEDEVA, special correspondent:
If Golembiovskiy is not elected. I insist we vote for a strike.

The IZVESTIYA staff think it unacceptable and contrary to the interests of perestrioika that Golembiovskiy be dismissed without his consent from his position as First Deputy Editor-in-Chief of IZVESTIYA. The meeting demands a repeal of this decision and stresses that Golembiovskiy enjoys a high reputation among the staff.

The IZVESTIYA staff thinks it absolutely essential to meet with Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Anatoliy Lukyanov, heads of the chambers of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Chairman of the Committee on Glasnost of the USSR Supreme Soviet before the final decision has been passed.

The IZVESTIYA staff reserves the right to have its demands satisfied under the existing legislation, if and when the resolution of the meeting of January 30, 1991, on repealing the decision on Golembiovskiy's dismissal as First Deputy Editor-in-chief of IZVESTIYA is ignored.

The resolution of the meeting has been sent to USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev, Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Anatoliy Lukyanov, the heads of the Chambers of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Chairman of the Committee on Glasnost of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Republics Urge Voter Participation

LD0103065491 Moscow TASS in English 0641 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 1 TASS—The Central Committees of the Belorussian, Russian, and Ukrainian Communist Parties have called on communists, all working people, and all peoples in the Soviet Union to take active part in a March 17 referendum. The appeal is published today by the PRAVDA newspaper and other Soviet central newspapers.

Favouring a renovated Soviet Union, the committees said they were sure that it will help avoid further serious inter-ethnic conflicts.

They called on the Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian parliaments and governments to be the first to sign a Union treaty.

In addition to the appeal, the SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA newspaper carries the results of an opinion poll, conducted between February 19-21. A total of 1,575 people in 18 regions of the country and seven union republics were polled apropos their attitude to the referendum.

Some 68 percent of the poll favoured retaining the Soviet Union as a renovated federation of equal sovereign republics, guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of people of all nationalities.

Onslaught on Glasnost Examined

PM2803104091 Moscow MOSCOW NEWS in English No 6, 10-17 Feb 91 p 8

[Article by Mikhail Fedotov, deputy minister of the press and information of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, under general headline "Glasnost Is Too Young To Retire!": "Authorities Defy the Law on the Press"]

[Text] Today's open attacks on glasnost were preceded by covert but purposeful actions. The Law on the Press

almost immediately was followed by a number of regulations contradicting it. Among other things, it eliminated censorship. The Council of Ministers however restored it in the temporary regulations on censorship. The presidential Decree on what it terms as "democratization" of TV and radio has in effect taken away the journalist's right to voice his own opinions.

This covert onslaught on glasnost includes a regulation requiring the registration of TV and radio media by the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting together with the Ministries of Justice and Communications which still believes in the old practices of banning and permitting things at will. While there are many types of self-styled laws, the above document is a stunning instance of the disregard of law.

The onslaught on glasnost in various forms is in evidence in the provinces. The local governments and newspapers registered as their publications ae under tremendous pressure. They are urged to get registered again as party and government newspapers (note, the word "party" is put first). This process is moving very swiftly in the Krasnoyarsk Territory, in Yakutia and many other places. journalists of the Rostov-on-Don branch of the Union of Soviet Journalists have issued a statement complaining that many party committees meddle in the work of their newspapers, and publications in the press continue to be censured.

The independent press is faced with economic sanctions. The Ministry of Communications levies huge taxes on it. Newspapers which obey local authorities buy their newsprint at reasonable prices while mavericks have to pay through the nose for it. The newspaper VYBOR (Choice) in Lipetsk, the Central Black-Earth Zone of Russia is a good example. Practically all other similar publications face the same problem.

The newspaper GRAZHDANSKIY (Civil Peace) from the Northern Caucasus, which circulates primarily in the Krasnodar and the Stavropol territories, is threatened with closure. The local authorities have said plainly that they will not have it in their areas. In the Orel Region, the newspaper GOLOS DEMOKRATA [Democrat's Voice) had to overcome great difficulties to get registered only to find now that no printing shop would print it.

There are also more subtle ways to choke the democratic media. One consists in local radio committees occupying the air waves to transmit their programmes during the hours assigned for rebroadcasts of Radio Russia. If they did this to Central Radio programmes, they would have to answer for their arbitrary actions.

Pamyat Members Eject Television Crew

LD2702210191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1800 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Text] On the incident at the soiree of the MOLODAYA GVARDIYA [Young Guard] magazine, there is also a report from the NOVOSTI Agency. The film crew from the program "Good Evening, Moscow" was removed from the auditorium of the socio-political center of the Moscow City CPSU Committee, in which a meeting was taking place between readers and members of the editorial collegium of the MOLODAYA GVARDIYA magazine put out by the central committee of the All-Union Leninist Communist Youth League.

According to chief editor Anatoliy Ivanov, the journalists were making a provocative film. They wanted to film the empty seats in the auditorium and then use that as a comment that no one comes to our soirees. But they will not manage to do that, he stated, to the stormy applause of those assembled. Later, Ivanov also added that the reporters were in a drunken state and that the militia was now dealing with them.

According to a statement by the television journalists, people wearing the badges of the Pamyat society forcibly compelled them to leave the building of the center, and in doing so stole the batteries from the video camera.

Marxist Platform Council on Yeltsin

PM2802132591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 27 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

[Statement by the Coordinating Council of the Marxist Platform in the CPSU: "In the Role of a 'Battering Ram'"]

[Text] The Coordinating Council of the Marxist Platform in the CPSU perceives B.N. Yeltsin's 19 February television appearance as yet another stage in a coordinated campaign geared to the disintegration of the Soviet Union, restoration of the bourgeois system, and elimination of Soviet power. B.N. Yeltsin was not just expressing his own views, but, in concise form, the stance of the entire antisocialist moment.

One month ago, on 26-27 January, the founding conference of the so-called "Democratic Congress" was held in Kharkov. It was attended by 35 opposition parties and movements ranging from "Sajudis" to the former "Democratic Platform," and it opposed:

—the preservation of the USSR as a federative state;

—the preservation of the USSR as a socialist state;

—the preservation of the USSR as a Soviet state.

The "Appeal to the Peoples and Parliaments of the Sovereign Republics," adopted by the Kharkov conference, proposes in particular: "A vote of no confidence in M.S. Gorbachev and a demand for the resignation of the president... and cabinet members Pavlov, Kryuchkov, Pugo, Yazov, and Kravchenko. The transfer of all power to the Federation Council and parliaments of the sovereign republics." It was this part of the appeal that B.N. Yeltsin repeated in his appearance. The final section of the appeal, a call for "Civil disobedience with regard to the implementation of the unconstitutional decrees and

actions of M.S. Gorbachev and his team" was left for the next round of confrontation.

The rallies "in defense" of Yeltsin, held in Moscow, Leningrad, and some other cities 24 February, confirmed in their slogans and resolutions that B.N. Yeltsin is effectively performing the role of a "battering ram" for all the forces that advocate a change in the USSR's social and political system and hope that this task would be more easily solved in the conditions of a disintegrating Union.

On this basis, the Coordinating Council of the Marxist Platform in the CPSU deems it impossible that a politician who is openly, deliberately, and constantly violating the USSR Constitution should remain in the top RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] state post. We appeal to all citizens of our republic to demand that Russian people's deputies seek to get the RSFSR Supreme Soviet chairman replaced.

The supporters of the Marxist Platform can see many shortcomings in the activity of the USSR president and union government, and have said so repeatedly. However, in conditions where actions are being taken to change the USSR constitutional system, we declare our support for the USSR president.

Let us preserve the unity of our homeland—the USSR!

[Signed] Coordinating Council of the Marxist Platform in the CPSU.

Soviets Worry More About Shortages, Not Ideology

AU0103083291 Paris AFP in English 0826 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Moscow, March 1 (AFP)—Soviet people worry about shortages and rising prices, not about ideology, according to an opinion poll reported by the independent INTERFAX news agency.

Sixty-seven per cent of those polled by the National Public Opinion Studies Centre said they were mostly concerned about shortages of food and basic consumer goods. Fifty-nine per cent also said they worried about rising prices.

A total of 29 per cent expressed concern over rising crime, 23 per cent over environmental problems and 22 per cent voiced discontent over what they see as government impotence.

However, only 13 per cent said they thought the country was headed for dictatorship and three per cent said they worried over deviation from socialist ideas.

The poll was conducted last month nationwide among 2,075 people. [passage omitted]

Poll on Referendum Shows Support for Union

PM0103143791 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 1 Mar 91 First Edition p 1

[Unattributed report under the rubric "According to Sociologists' Data": "Sixteen Days to the Referendum"]

[Text] The Sociological Research Center conducted a study of the population's attitude to the upcoming all-union referendum 19-21 February 1991. In the course of the study, 1,575 people were polled in 18 parts of the country, including seven republics—the Ukraine, Belorussia, Latvia, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Moldova. Below we publish the replies obtained on one point.

The question being put to the referendum reads as follows: "Do you consider it necessary to preserve the USSR as a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics, in which the rights and freedoms of persons of any nationality will be guaranteed in full?"

If the referendum were held tomorrow, how would you answer this question?
Yes—68 percent.
No—11 percent.
Undecided—20 percent.
No reply—1 percent.

Sensitive Explosives Detector Developed

PM2802124191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 27 Feb 91 First Edition p 1

[TASS report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "For Combating Terrorism"]

[Text] Novosibirsk—A detector developed by scientists at Novosibirsk's Institute of Applied Physics will reliably assist militia personnel and Aeroflot specialists in the fight against air terrorism. This portable device is 100 times more sensitive than its foreign counterparts and easily detects explosives by... smell. It is not hampered by background smells—paint, gasoline, perfume. This year the institute will embark on series production of these detectors.

Economic

Yavlinskiy on Crisis, Possible Measures

914A0474A Moscow ARGUMENTY I FAKTY in Russian No 8, Feb 91 pp 1, 5-6

[Interview with G. Yavlinskiy by unattributed correspondents; place and date not given: "The 'Patient' Has Not Yet Been Treated Properly"]

[Text]**The name of G. Yavlinskiy flared up in our economic and political firmament and receded into the shadows. Yet, judging from the mailbag, interest in an author of the 500 days program is, as before, great. Our**

correspondents interview G. Yavlinskiy on the economic and political situation in the country.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] What, in your opinion, needs to be done today?

[Yavlinskiy] First, we need to put economic reform at the center of the political business of all parliaments. Not dissipate talents on trifling matters. Understand that everyone's future depends on this.

Second, understand that the center of economic power remains where it was. The banks, finances, credit, and customs are in its hands. But this power should be placed under economic supervision. But what is needed for this is a strong economic interrepublic committee which, given a program and leader, would make it possible to tackle many problems, distribution of authority between the center and the republics included.

Third, we need to explain clearly to people the reasons for what is happening. Price rises are being prepared currently. Where do these come from? It has to be said plainly that the planned "Pavlovian" reform of retail prices was designed back in 1987-1988 by the USSR State Committee for Prices. Scientists' recommendations to the effect that it could not be implemented in this way were disregarded. In turn, the economic decisions adopted in recent years ultimately made this reform inevitable. People should know who thought up this reform and who is responsible for it.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] The processes that are occurring in the economy today can hardly be called a reform. We are still en route to it rather.

[Yavlinskiy] A reform is under way. But the danger of this reform is that the main economic measures are frequently being implemented in distorted form, and the economy is becoming increasingly criminal.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] So it could be that our society, given the anarchy being observed in the economy, really does need a "market with kulaks" and presidential rule?

[Yavlinskiy] We need first and foremost to clearly answer the question: What problems will we resolve with the aid of presidential rule—a reduction in budget expenditure, a strengthening of the ruble, a stabilization of the economy? If we answer it, we would be answering the following question also: Is presidential rule essential or are the powers that the president has currently sufficient?

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] "Vremya" recently dealt with the topic of a textile works coming to a halt because there was no wool. What do you think, could soldiers help carry this wool to the loom?

[Yavlinskiy] Imposing presidential rule for the purpose of additional strong economic measures is pointless. The president even now has all powers, supplementary powers included. They are more than sufficient for the implementation of any economic reforms. It is, therefore, indeed now a question of presidential rule in the purely political aspect. There is no question of economics here. There are no substantive features in presidential rule for the economy.

Had there been a real redistribution of power and had it been transferred to the republics, which had failed to cope with it, it would then be understandable. "The republics are not coping—let us take power back." But no one has given them real power. And the idea that a sick economy may be supported with the help of the Army is absurd.

There has been under investment in the oil industry for about three years now. By the end of the year, power engineering will be on the verge of total crisis. Such problems, as you understand, cannot be solved by an arbitrary edict alone. A state program of investment in the priority areas is essential here. We must now earnestly examine the prospects of Western investments in our economy. But they are possible only given a large-scale economic program, which would evoke trust among our Western partners.

There is one further aspect. The emergency measures will inevitably lead to a decline in business activity. Whoever is afraid will cease to engage in business or will head for the West. Whoever is not will make for the criminal, shadow economy. This will essentially be a boost to its development.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] But many people believe that we have already come too far to turn back—to the administrative system.

[Yavlinskiy] Yet in 1928-1932 we switched to it from the NEP [New Economic Plan] very smoothly. And we could switch to it in this manner now also, by way of presidential rule included. To what extent this attempt could be effective is another matter. But it could be done.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] You speak about the future, but this is already our present....

[Yavlinskiy] Our present is more complex. We are in fact in a serious crisis, and feeling our way toward ways out is very difficult, unambiguous ways all the more so. And evaluating the center's steps in this sense is quite difficult—whether a search for these ways is under way, whether a purposive movement in some direction has begun.

One thing may be said for certain: The chaos reigning in the economy has been caused by the incapacity of the central structures for administration of the state. When this incapacity for competently managing economic processes reaches a peak, as now, a search for culprits elsewhere begins—be it the press, the cooperativists, the shadow economy operators, imperialists, or some others.

The edict on combating economic sabotage, for example, ensues from the following ridiculous idea: The country has everything, apparently, but some people have hidden

it somewhere. The KGB will find these "granaries of the motherland," and merchandise will appear on the shelves in an instant.

During the energy crisis in Japan toilet paper disappeared all of sudden. I asked the Japanese: Have you engaged the intelligence services to find it? They laughed. But we are seeking this mythical wealth with the aid of intelligence. Thereby continuing to fool the people instead of saying that it does not exist, that it still has to be created. These, unfortunately, are the characteristics and style of our contemporary economic thinking—the main thing is not to produce but redistribute.

In three or four months it will be clear to everyone that, as with Ryzhkov's program, the present actions will not lead us out of the crisis. Realizing last January that the Ryzhkov program would end in failure, we began to put together the program that subsequently became the "500 days."

The situation now is similar, but far more complex. Crisis phenomena have now affected the structures of power also. Whereas a year ago there was a hope that a president who would adopt a prudent program and start to act might emerge, we now have to think also about the following: For whom is the program being created? Account needs to be taken of the interethnic tension also.

That is, we know how to cure the patient, but he must obey the condition: "Stay in bed." If he runs about the streets barefoot every day, he needs to be treated in another clinic, in a different way. It is an absurd situation.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] What are its "clinical indications?"

[Yavlinskiy] Well just look at what we are doing now. Everyone is in a state of suspense, trying to find out whether we wanted to sell R140 billion in bundles or by the truck load. We have latched onto this business in earnest instead of right away calling it a piece of stupidity and forgetting about it. But there is more. It is being discussed whether or not Gorbachev wants to sell the Kurile Islands to the samurai for 200 billion rubles [R]. The latest additions—is not everything failing because we are being bugged everywhere? I refer to the investigation concerning special equipment in the RSFSR Supreme Soviet building. Or the fear on account of Western banks wanting to buy up our country for R8 billion.

All this is far removed from the wool that the loom has stopped receiving.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] Can an effective reform be implemented in an individual republic, in Russia, for example?

[Yavlinskiy] No. Professionals from all the republics must sit down at one table and negotiate which matters to decide individually in each republic, and which, always and only in the center. Inasmuch as there is a single economic space and credit and finance system. After some transitional period, adjustments would be made and a single mechanism designed.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] But this is still a long way off?

[Yavlinskiy] The "sovereign" cheeks have a little way to run and puff out yet. Then it will be necessary to get together and get something resolved. This moment is very close. The pendulum is already practically at a standstill and is on the point of going back. It is important to correctly see the start of this process, when the incapacity of many republic governments is ascertained.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] A strict centralized system could be imposed once again when this moment comes?

[Yavlinskiy] But we have already had this. Catching the moment, a healthy version based on the interaction of the republics could be proposed. All should recognize that economic revival is possible only as a result of joint actions.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] So the crisis is really most profound. But there have been such situations in many countries. And the world has not turned over—recession has been followed by upturn. Could we today even speak about a guarded optimism?

[Yavlinskiy] Yes, and we hold the view that the start of the pursuit of some rational policy is the light at the end of the tunnel.

There is a heap of unutilized possibilities. It would be far worse had everything already been tried and found wanting. And in this sense there is no reason for panic. The "patient" has not yet been treated properly.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] What kind of possibilities are you talking about?

[Yavlinskiy] A financial policy in keeping with the situation in the country has not been pursued for a single day. No one has analyzed the budget as yet. Could one-third of all envisaged expenditure be unnecessary? We do not know how the center disposes of gold under world market conditions. Perhaps it would be better reducing its sale overseas for a year or two, jacking up the price, which would be far more profitable? The same with oil and conversion. And there are thousands of such possibilities. With our giant military potential it might be more profitable to sel' some products, aircraft, say, not thoughtlessly reprofiling modern plants for the production of saucepans.

But for this enterprises of the defense sectors with a science- intensive product need to be given an opportunity to move onto the Western market.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] And politically?

[Yavlinskiy] Have we tried to do anything on a coalition basis? But if we have tried nothing, what are we scared of?

If in six years we have done almost everything to the detriment of ourselves, as it were, torturing the people and the country, then what opportunities the economy of the USSR has! If by force of inertia, almost unmanageable, it still holds together!

Our resource potential is enormous. The country is urbanized, the population is mainly literate, no one is about to attack us. This is the objective reality.

Then, subjectively. Many illusions and mystifications are already dying out—such as the sovereignty of Krasnopresnenskiy Rayon by itself.

A year ago the authorities were saying: Who would purchase the shares? Only the "self-interested." Yet the selling off of Menatep shares began—and in a month half a billion rubles' worth had been sold. They were purchased by everyone, even students, what is more. What if it were not the stock of Menatep but of the Ural Machine-Building Plant or the Volga Auto Plant which was sold? Here you would have a powerful source of financing.

The GUM joint-stock company has just been formed. And no one has been tearing his hair out. People are prepared to accept everything, and, what is most important, the market economy, only let's be quicker about it! Everyone is prepared to suffer for a certain length of time, it is just certainty that is needed.

The moment of truth has arrived. People have begun to recognize that there is in the granaries of the motherland virtually nothing, despite the KGB search.

The myth of billions overseas and of the madness of our shadow economy, which has hidden hundreds of billions in sacks, has only just been dispelled.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] In your view, we should not be afraid of a repetition of de-kulakization and collectivization and of having to grow beets beneath the barrel of a machine gun?

[Yavlinskiy] How has totalitarianism lived these 74 years? First, we renounced all foreign debt. Then we lived as parasites on the pumping of virtually all resources from the peasantry, and a vast army of prisoners toiled for free. Then the squandering of natural resources—oil, gas, gold, timber—began.

What is left the present candidates for dictator? Virtually nothing since the resource-producing sectors are in decline also. So on what could they live as parasites today in order to maintain the population's living standard at a beggarly level?

For this reason dictatorship has no economic prerequisites for any kind of prolonged existence. Reserves are exhausted.

[ARGUMENTY I FAKTY] How is your group working now?

[Yavlinskiy] We have formed a scientific commercial company. Its purpose is to elaborate programs and recommendations pertaining to economic development. We exist thanks to sponsors or, in Russian, Maecenas', on condition of our independence.

FROM THE EDITORS: The legal address of the Economic and Political Research Center (EPIcenter) is: 2 Krasnopresnenskaya Naberezhnaya, Moscow. USSR State Bank Central Branch Account No 608202.

Industry Chiefs Ask for Conversion Funding

PM2802160191 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 26 Feb 91 First Edition p 2

[Undated "Open Letter to USSR President M.S. Gorbachev and USSR Prime Minister V.S. Pavlov"]

[Text] Esteemed Mikhail Sergeyevich and Valentin Sergeyevich!

The extremely critical situation that has arisen this year over financing the development of new technology for the agro-industrial complex' needs has compelled us to address you in an open letter.

As is known, from 1988 the USSR Government made the defense complex responsible for the level of technical development and for producing and fully meeting the equipment requirement for the agro-industrial complex' processing branches. The correctness of such a radical decision is borne out by the results of the past three years. In this time enterprises of the defense branches of industry have almost doubled the output of machines, assemblies, and lines for the said purposes.

Understanding the importance of the set task for a radical technical retooling of the food industry in defense branches in compressed time spans, sometimes even to the detriment of orders from military departments, 200 defense institutes and design bureaus and 265 enterprises joined in the development and production of technological equipment for the agro-industrial complex.

Prior to 1991 the financing of research and design and experimental work was carried out by the client who was ordering the equipment, paid for from resources allocated from the budget in accordance with the USSR Council of Ministers-approved program for creating new types of machinery for the agro-industrial complex' processing branches. Defense research institutes, design bureaus, and enterprises lack their own resources for these purposes.

Despite the fact that in 1991-1995 we have to start up series production of over 3,000 types of new high-efficiency equipment (including equipment delivered previously from East European countries)—which is five times greater than what was actually started up in the

preceding five years—to date virtually not a single contract for developing the said technology has been concluded through lack of finance sources.

If this question is not resolved soon, the defense institutes and design bureaus concerned will be faced with the necessity of stopping this work and disbanding the collectives which have been formed and which have already accumulated specific experience in designing food industry equipment.

We, leaders of defense research and design organizations, having studied the agro-industrial complex' problems, realize that if a modern food industry is not created the comprehensive processing of agricultural output cannot be ensured, the considerable losses of this output accruing cannot be eliminated, and accordingly the country's food problem cannot be solved. However, the lack of finance now threatens to wreck the system for creating and producing new technology for the agro-industrial complex' needs—a system set up with considerable difficulty in the defense complex. The same critical situation has arisen over financing work on new technology for light industry.

Since the time for solving this question is measured not in months but in days, we request your immediate intervention.

[signed] From the USSR Ministry of the Aviation Industry:

Yu.Ye. Reshetnikov, general designer at the Perm Design and Experimental Engine Building Design Bureau; G.N. Mordvinov, general director of the Dolgoprudnenskiy Production Association; A.S. Kachura, general director of the Kiev Artem Production Association; I.S. Seleznev, general designer at the Moscow "Raduga" Design Bureau; G.Ye. Lozinskiy, general designer at the "Molniya" Scientific Production Association.

From the USSR Ministry of General Machine Building:

V.N. Konyukhov, general designer at the "Yuzhnoye" Design Bureau; D.A. Polukhin, general designer at the "Salyut" Design Bureau; V.N. Solovyev, chief of and chief designer at the Transport Machine Building Design Bureau; V.P. Arefyev, chief designer at the Control Instruments Research Institute; Yu.V. Berestovskiy, general director of the "Korpus" Production Association; A.D. Konopatov, chief designer at the Chemical Automatics Design Bureau; G.V. Kostin, general director of the Voronezh Mechanical Plant.

From the USSR Ministry of Atomic Power Engineering and Industry:

P.P. Melnik, general director of and chief designer at the "Mir" Scientific Production Association; A.S. Igolkin, chief designer at the Special Packing Machines Design Bureau; V.V. Matveyev, director of and chief designer at the Union Instrument Making Research Institute; V.I. Kazakov, chief of and chief designer at the Motor Transport Equipment Design Bureau; V.N. Rozhdestvenskiy, director of and chief designer at the "Chepetskiy Mechanical Plant" Production Association; V.V. Volkov, chief designer at the "Mir" Scientific Production Association; Candidate of Technical Sciences N.I. Gushchin, chief of and chief designer at the Machine Building Design Bureau under the USSR Ministry of the Defense Industry; Candidate of Technical Sciences O.F. Demidov, chief of the Minsk Machine Building Experimental Design Bureau under the USSR Ministry of the Defense Industry; S.A. Lavkovskiy, chief designer at the "Lazurit" Central Design Bureau under the USSR Ministry of the Shipbuilding Industry; and A.V. Kuteynikov, chief designer at the "Malakhit" SPMB [expansion unknown] under the USSR Ministry of the Shipbuilding Industry.

Russian Conduct in Ekho Deal Hit

91UF0504A Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 19 Feb 91 First Edition pp 1, 4

[Article by Yu. Nikolayev under the heading "In Search of 140 Billion": "Silent Movies; A Necessary Epilogue to a Closed Meeting of the Session of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet"]

[Text] The entire journalist corps that is reporting on the work of the Russian parliament was placed in a humiliating and idiotic situation last Friday. The parliament decided to hear a report in a closed meeting of the session of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet commission on the examination of the sensational contract involving the sale of 140 billion rubles [R] for $7.756 billion. Newspaper, radio, and television correspondents were removed from the hall. A situation was created that was worse than you could imagine. The journalists could observe the heated debates on television screens that were set up in the House of Soviets on Krasnopresnenskaya Naberezhnaya, but they could not hear anything. Supporters of democracy and glasnost turned off the sound...

Is it necessary to say that such "silent movies" evoked a natural indignation not only among all of my journalistic colleagues but also among our readers, viewers, and listeners. As early as Saturday morning the trills of telephones ringing began to deafen the editorial office. People were perplexed: Why all of a sudden did such a "democratic Supreme Soviet," "after covering itself with a blanket," start to discuss a scandalous deal that affects the vital interests of each Russian and each Soviet person. After all, the conversation was about your hard-earned rubles and mine, and it is not a small sum—just about all of our cash on hand. The secrecy of the discussion was especially incomprehensible since all of us have become accustomed to following for hours on the blue screen discussions taking place in the Russian parliament that were at times debates over pointless procedural questions. But here there is a critical problem and... they turned off the sound.

Muscovites and residents of other cities all requested the same thing from the editorial staff: Find a way, after all, to recount the hearing on the "140 billion affair" and the conclusions reached by the deputy commission. But how? I called up R.I. Khasbulatov, first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, explained the situation, and asked for permission to familiarize myself with the verbatim report.

"But there is no verbatim report," Ruslan Imranovich replied, "we did not conduct one..."

I admit that I did not know immediately what to say after such a discouraging reply. For we are not talking about a gathering of young people but about a meeting of the highest legislative organ of the republic, which was looking into a very important state question... How was it possible not to record the opinions and evaluations expressed by the people's deputies? I ask R.I. Khasbulatov at least to share his impressions with me.

"They are distressing," says Ruslan Imranovich. "It is still necessary to ponder what was heard..."

"Then tell me about the decision that was made."

"Yes, we did prepare a draft decision, which in my opinion was not bad, but we could not adopt it, there was no quorum..."

At the conclusion of our conversation the first deputy of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet advised turning for an explanation to A.P. Pochinok, the head of the deputy commission, who "has the full information." I find him in the hotel, and I repeat my questions to him.

"I was against the hearing being held behind closed doors," says Aleksandr Petrovich. "But I insist now categorically: My evaluations must not appear in SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, and my name must not be mentioned in your newspaper..."

That, then, was the ultimatum. In principle, it is impracticable. It is possible, of course, not to refer to his personal evaluations (especially since he did not express them), but not to mention the name of the principal source of information...

Like it or not, I had to go to the deputies and query them. Incidentally, it was obvious from everything that the interviewees also felt uncomfortable. Inasmuch as there was a closed meeting of the session, it seemed they did not have the moral right to publicize the information they received.. This is on the one hand. But on the other hand... What then will a deputy tell the voters in this case? Will he drop hints or make excuses: Listen, he says, I heard nothing and saw nothing.

During meetings with members of the Supreme Soviet I recalled more than once another "deal of the century," as it was called then. It concerned a contract with the Italian firm "Fiat" for the construction of a Volga automobile plant. I worked at the time on the Kuybyshev Oblast newspaper VOLZHSKAYA KOMMUNA, and I was very well informed about the scale of cooperation that was initiated with the famous foreign partner, as well as about many of the details and features in the actions of both sides. Even during the time of stagnation, as it is now customary to call that period, there was no need to "acquire" and "elicit" information concerning the implementation of an unprecedented transaction.

With all seriousness, I intend to confirm the opposite: It was the wide publicity on the practical implementation of the contract that made it possible to ensure its genuine national support, and as a result, the unbelievably short period of time to erect the automotive giant on the Volga.

There was no Law on the Press then that guaranteed the journalist's right to acquire information. But we wrote in detail and a lot about everything that concerned the construction of the VAZ [Volga Automobile Plant]. Negligent and incompetent executives were criticized. I do not recall any instance when I or one of my colleagues was reproached for publicizing commercial secrets. Although they certainly must have existed in such a tremendous undertaking. But why today, under the conditions of democratization and an operational Law on the Press, does the Russian legislature put a journalist in a situation where he is without rights? He is forced to recreate the picture of what happened from tidbits, in order to give the readers some idea?...

However, there is nothing that can be done. It becomes necessary to beg participants of the closed discussion to share the information they have. The The following can approximately be garnered from the pages of deputies' notebooks.

On 11 December 1990 a letter came to I.S. Silayev from Colin Gibbins with a proposal to buy R140 billion for U.S. dollars. On 20 December, G.I. Filshin, deputy chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers, sent this letter to the Russian House company to D.I. Novikov, and to RSFSR Minister of Foreign Economic Relations V.N. Yaroshenko. On 11 January 1991, G.I. Filshin held a discussion on the question of concluding a transaction between the Rebirth of the Urals Countryside association and the firm Dove Trading International. It was on the basis of this discussion that G.I. Filshin wrote the well-known letter that he now chooses to call nothing other than a "limited document."

The session also turned its attention to the following details. The letter was written by G.I. Filshin with a deviation from the rules. In particular, the RSFSR Council of Ministers form was twice certified with the government seal. This seal was placed on a document, that was intended to be taken out of the USSR. One can only guess how RSFSR Minister of Justice Comrade Fedorov, and immediately after him I.S. Silayev, managed not to find any violations of "norms and rules" in this "official document."

It was also learned that in reaching his decision, G.I. Filshin instructed A.N. Shalashov, manager of the

Moscow Interregional Bank, to open a ruble account for the participants of the deal. It was noted that Gennadiy Innokentyevich did not simply approve the transaction, as he represented in his first report to the Supreme Soviet, **but "specific assistance took place in the creation of conditions for the fulfillment of the contract. Even after the contract document was retained by Sheremetyevo customs, he continued to promote the implementation of the contract."** Only one thing remains unclear: Does this give rise to any kind of legal obligation or not? The minister of justice previously asserted that "it does not..."

Facts like these that were established by the Supreme Soviet commission also had a depressing effect on the deputies I interviewed. During the conduct of the negotiations, the signing of the contract, and the receipt of assistance and support in the RSFSR Council of Ministers, the purchasing firm was not yet determined, and there was no information at all on the Soviet side about its status and financial position. It seems that such an important decision on the sale of 140 billion of our national rubles was made absolutely in the dark and at random.

A myth was also spread and is being propagandized by Filshin himself and his supporters that the intended operation does not have any relationship to the purchase-sale of currency. Behind such abstruse words as "credit transfer," "reinvestment," and the like, they nonetheless tried to sell rubles for dollars at an exorbitant rate of exchange (1:18). Judging by the explanation of A.N. Shalashov, chairman of the Moscow Interregional Commercial Bank, who opened the ruble deposit account, it was planned to use the account to save up monetary amounts for their subsequent transfer to the foreign firm.

Implementation of the scandalous deal, in the opinion of the deputy commission, created a threat to the stability of relations with the Union republics, destabilized the process of money circulation in the country, and gave rise to uncontrollable financial flows. The crisis of confidence with respect to the governments of the RSFSR and the USSR would be aggravated. The concentration of an astronomical sum in the hands of an unstated firm could lead to financial sabotage both against individual republics and against the entire country. This is the quagmire that the "saviors" of Russia were dragging it into! One can only be amazed, excuse me, at the buffoonery in which different leaders and an outwardly "democratic" but biased press continue to engage.

We will recall the first reaction of B.N. Yeltsin, chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, to the confusing and insincere report by G.I. Filshin to the Supreme Soviet session on 24 January.

"Well, what, are we justifying it?" Boris Nikolayevich asked immediately.

Afterward, at the same session, I.S. Silayev gave an angry rebuke to everyone who dared to doubt the lawfulness of the actions of the "Russian deputy chairman." He rebuked the central newspapers "for fabrications."

But it is really something that there was a whole series of articles by these, our colleagues, trying to prove with all their might that it is not evil but good that is brought by the implementation of the agreement by the adventurers from our side and that side (as the organizers of the deal said more than once at the closed meeting).

Or that comedy with the retirement of the deputy chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers. ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA published the statement of G.I. Filshin and I.S. Silayev under the frightening headline "The 'Shooting' of the Government Continues." It seems to makes sense to reproduce it.

"Dear Ivan Stepanovich!

"The anti-government political campaign that has been initiated by certain forces around my name once again convinces me that a scenario worked out beforehand is being conducted systematically to discredit not only individual members of the RSFSR Council of Ministers but also, as a whole, the program and actions of the Russian leadership in the sphere of stabilization of the economy.

"In all probability, the intelligence services and part of the workers of the staff are included in this unseemly affair. All of my official correspondence is being monitored, it is being communicated through channels set up over the decades, and it is being intentionally distorted by controlled central organs of the press.

"Today, I no longer have the ability to execute my official duties fully, spending much time explaining obvious truths and disavowing groundless and gross attacks.

"In this situation I see no other way of expressing a protest, as has now become apparent, against an antidemocratic and provocative campaign other than to announce my resignation. Through this action I want to draw the attention of the public to the alarming events that are taking place in the country."

See how much self-assurance there is and how many guilty there are, it turns out, in the fact that he, G.I. Filshin, let down the Russian government. At the closed meeting of the session, Gennadiy Innokentyevich also continued in his own way to explain "obvious truths" and to "disavow" the harsh report of the deputy commission. But he placed all of the blame for getting involved with questionable partners on the Ministry of Trade. To the laughter of the hall, he assured those who were assembled that mountains of foodstuffs and industrial commodities were being held up "in Swiss ports" because of a suspension of the transaction. He did not want to correct himself even after there were repeated shouts: "But there are no oceans in Switzerland!" "There are mountains there, what ports?"

This time I.S. Silayev was more restrained in his assessments, and he did not defend his deputy so recklessly. He even admitted that Filshin committed two violations: He

exceeded his authority in that he did not have the right to give a letter to a stranger in the name of the Council of Ministers—this is the first thing. The second violation: He gave assurances on 11 January that the contract, which did not yet exist, would be upheld and that the parties would sign it as soon as 13 January. He also noted: Filshin tolerated both unconcern and negligence.

...At the very hour that I.S. Silayev was at the rostrum of the Supreme Soviet session, assuring those assembled of the competence of the government, TASS transmitted information by teletype about the arrival of a group of "Russian entrepreneurs and politicians from the Moscow center for international projects" in the Republic of South Africa. In an interview with a Johannesburg newspaper, Yu. Dubovitskiy, general director of the center, declared: "The Russian Federation is not bound to those restrictions with respect to South Africa that are maintained by the Soviet Government. Russia never voted for sanctions." Apparently, the fact that sanctions were voted by the entire world community, and that the United Nations very recently affirmed their necessity at the present stage, does not at all trouble the Russian "entrepreneur" and "politician."

The unusual ease with which the prestige of Russia, its national wealth, and our hard-earned rubles are being staked cannot be anything but disturbing in the end. The impression is created that the leaders of the republic, despairing of how at least to arrange the production of commodities and food products at home, rushed as fast as they could to search for good uncles abroad who would invest in Russia, raise its economy, and bring order to our collapsing life. In this way they would remove from them, the "democratic" managers, all responsibility for the material and spiritual well- being of the people of the Russian Federation. It was this then that compelled them to shut the door tight during the examination of the shady projects.

Filshin Statements on Echo Deal Rebutted

91UF0490A Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 14 Feb 91 First Edition p 2

[Article by Yu. Nikolayev: "Let Us Compare Arguments: In Search of 140 Billion"]

[Text] I probably would have agreed with the proposal of a number of people's deputies to wait with any new publications on the shameful and demeaning—for Russia—deal to sell 140 billion rubles [R] for $7,756 million until the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet commission finishes its work, were it not for one very important circumstance. The problem is that the RSFSR minister of justice, Comrade Fedorov, has issued a sort of legal innocence certificate to G.I. Filshin—who has approved this speculative operation—by assuring the republic Council of Ministers that the latter "had not undertaken any legal obligations and had not violated any rules or regulations."

Having received this absolution in advance, before the parliament commission finished its work, Gennadiy Innokentyevich directed his wrath at all those people who see a somewhat different role and degree of responsibility for the Russian deputy chairman in participating in this action which is harmful to the entire country. The result was a persistent stream of threats to sue SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA for "slander, fact-juggling, and twisted coverage of events," and for "sinking to the level of criminality." First these threats were delivered to the leadership over the telephone; then they were repeated, more than once, in the press and on the radio. Let us agree that to stay mum under the circumstances would not only mean to show fear in response to the bellowing of one of the leaders of Russian Federation, but also, in substance, to countenance the deception of the public.

Also, the leveled accusations are too serious not to respond. Especially considering that any reader can easily ascertain who is the one who casts the shadow over a clear day and whose ears are burning, as the saying goes. To do that, it is sufficient to look at the IZVESTIYA issue with G.I. Filshin's interview "We Have To Take Care of Russia" and the 9 February issue of ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA that contains his statement "By the Script of a Poorly Written Detective Story."

It is easy to see with a naked eye how evasive Gennadiy Innokentyevich is.

"Well, as to specific figures, I was not aware of them. The preliminary document that I acquainted myself with did not contain them." "You will agree that a deputy chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers does not have to get into all details of such contracts" (even if it will take emptying the pockets of all citizens of the Soviet Union to implement it.—Author).

As the shroud of secrecy over this affair gets lifted, it looks like Gennadiy Innokentyevich gathers enough courage for some half- truths. Now he says that "documented proposals presented to us from the Dove Trading corporation and the Rebirth of the Urals Countryside association are fully within the framework adopted by us; that is why they had been accepted." It is interesting: How can one determine whether the "document-supported proposal" falls within the "framework" without knowing either "specific figures" or "contract details?" He also tells in sufficient detail about the 11 January meeting where precisely these "details" and "figures" had been discussed.

Let us pay attention to this statement by him: "By the way, the 1:18 exchange rate that had been planted into the mass media is nothing but a figment of someone's imagination and incompetence." Then later: "According to our specialists' calculations, this ratio should work out approximately as $1 to R3-R5." He also states that "the Dove Trading corporation and the Rebirth of the Urals

Countryside association surfaced for the first and only time specifically at that meeting on 11 January 1991."

At the same time, RSFSR Deputy Minister of Trade V.A. Kozlov says in the interview published on 8 February in RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA: "A few days before the new year, 1991, G. Filshin, deputy chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers, called a meeting. Among those asked to attend was RSFSR Minister of Trade A. Khlystov and I, as his deputy. G. Filshin told us that during the last few months the government had received quite a few offers from Soviet and foreign private companies to sell us goods, with the payment made in rubles at the exchange ratio of R22-R25 to $1.

"The Council of Ministers could not agree to such speculatory prices. Now, he said, we have an offer of 1 to 18 ratio. Actually, it is the doing of those private companies. We were told that when the time for concrete contracts came closer, our experts would get involved, and they would not permit the rise in retail prices. After that the deputy chairman presented to us the Rebirth of the Urals Countryside association as one of the deal organizers."

So, who was it that planted into the mass media the 1:18 exchange rate? Of whose imagination is it a figment?

G.I. Filshin is also trying to resort to maneuvering now in regard to the sum involved in the deal: "First, R140 billion simply does not exist. The entire volume of cash in the country is R130 billion."

Here is, however, the published testimony of the same V.A. Kozlov: "After all, the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Ministry of Trade was carrying out the decision of the republic Council of Ministers, according to which we were supposed to buy—within the limits of the specified sum, R140 billion—on the best available terms the goods that our consumers need the most."

It is hard to find words that would adequately describe an almost desperate cynicism that oozes from almost every phrase. "Lately," says G.I. Filshin, "a campaign has been launched to discredit me as a member of the government, and to discredit the very opportunity to solve the problems of utmost complexity encountered by the republic, through foreign economic activities."

In one sentence, you see, not one but two invented assumptions are brought together, while either does not have a slightest foundation—if we have in mind our newspaper's publications in regard to the scandalous machination. Have we, even once, expressed any doubts in a possibility of solving current problems "through foreign economic activities?"

Now, about the discreditation "campaign." Here, if you forgive me, the author really shoots himself in the foot, by his superficial attitude towards an extremely serious matter—an attitude that is unforgivable for a such high-ranking official.

In his "statement" G.I. Filshin resorts to a "self-quote," but, for some reason, only from the Russian text of the letter to Dove Trading International President Colin Gibbins. Perhaps, the English version should have been reproduced.

A photocopy—that ostensibly does not entail legal obligations—has caused indignation on the part of the readers, especially those who speak English, even minimally. Even Moscow seventh-graders Petya Rosanov and Valeriy Katsura discovered eight orthographic and stylistic errors in this amazingly illiterate document; their teacher G.I. Rosenfeld pointed out more than 15 of them... They also sent us a verbatim translation. Here is this abracadabra: "The Council of Ministers of Russian Republics accepts and approves help in realization between Dove Trading Industrial and Restoration of Rebirth of Urals County despite the credit postal transfer, with the subsequent reinvestment of Soviet Rubles in the economy of the Russian Republic, meaning delivery and conveyance of consumer goods."

This is the nonsense under which there is a personal signature of the deputy chairman of the RSFSR Council Ministers, authenticated by the state seal!

And another "statement." "The government based its policy in this area on the so-called Marshall Plan which had been realized, in its fullest sense, in the process of restoration of the West German economy destroyed by the war." Wow!

If we were to believe, for instance, the current member of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Chairman B.N. Yeltsin's Coordinating Council, Academician G. Arbatov, who recently published—together with a group of equally authoritative scientists—an encyclopedic reference book "Modern Times United States of America," the Marshall Plan had distinguished itself by rather specific contents. Its de facto task was to "aid in carrying out the main goals of the 'policy from a position of strength' and 'containment'—that is, the isolation of the USSR and squeezing it out of Eastern Europe, the stabilization and consolidation of capitalist states, their involvement in a military pact under the United States stewardship, and staving off progressive social changes in the world." Some model for imitation!

Just as unconvincing are G.I. Filshin's endless assertions that the republic government and its ministry of trade intended to maintain effective control over all the processes of hard currency and goods buying and selling, and over the subsequent reinvestment of the resources into the Russian economy. To prove that, it is enough just to look at the contract itself. It says, in not too literate but quite straightforward form: "In accordance with the letter of the RSFSR Council of Ministers (attached), Dove Trading International delivers consumer goods in accordance with the agreed upon positions of the RSFSR Ministry of Trade, which confers on Dove Trading International an exclusive right in the use of hard currency received as a result of credit transfer."

As we can see, there is not even a hint at watching out for Russian interests here, not with the exclusive right given away to a con artist.

Judging by reaction of SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA readers, G.I. Filshin's numerous interviews and statements are a cause of grave concern and bring out doubts of whether the high brass of the Russian Government is capable of competently and deliberately carrying out foreign economic activities. Each new fact from the history of this scandalous deal that becomes public brings business people, financiers, jurists, and scientists into a state of shock... Here is what V. Solodovnikov, a notable diplomat, corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and deputy chairman of the Soviet Committee for Solidarity With Peoples of Asia and Africa, writes to us:

"As a scientist specializing in Africa, I cannot believe that the Dove Trading corporation—the foreign partner in the multibillion deal approved by the Russian Government—is registered in South Africa. If this is really true, then the deal to sell R140 billion is scandalous and immoral not only from the point of view of finance, but is also illegal from the point of view of foreign policy, since it contradicts the political position of the Soviet state, as well as general humanitarian principles in regard to comprehensive sanctions against the apartheid regime. All of those who entered this deal with the South African firm, and those who approved it, should know that the world community, through the United Nations, has declared apartheid a crime against humanity and called on all countries in the world to boycott it in all respects, including trade, economic, and financial ones. Even the United States, constructively an ally of South Africa, has been applying the policy of limited economic and financial sanctions against South Africa since 1986. In December 1990, the UN General Assembly reaffirmed its decision to extend sanctions against South Africa until full elimination of apartheid. The Soviet Government voted for this resolution."

A letter from another specialist on Africa brings many other very interesting details. A delegation of the Soviet consortium Ecoprom was going to South Africa. It turns out that, together with it, the people in Johannesburg were expecting one more guest listed in the airline passenger manifest. The South African authorities were so certain of his arrival that they had rushed in advance to inform local and foreign correspondents about it. The name of the expected guest is V.N. Yaroshenko, the RSFSR minister of foreign economic affairs.

At this point there is no way to avoid a reasonable question: Why does G.I. Filshin, in his statements and interviews, persistently avoid comments on the partners he had helped with such ease to look for the keys to the Russian and foreign banks?

The "Ekho Moskvy" radio program quoted G.I. Filshin's words that SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA sank to the level of criminality: "As a USSR people's deputy, I intend to sue SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in the court of law, for stealing the document and for slander against me." Perhaps, Gennadiy Innokentyevich should be more careful with such statements. Especially now that there are more than a thousand people in the orbit of attention of the USSR Procuracy's special investigative group, and there accumulated mountains of documents that clarify and supplement all aspects of the scandalous deal.

Agricultural

Land Ownership Debate, Prospects Pondered

PM2802120191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 21 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

[Unattributed article: "One Land For All"]

[Text] We are currently in the process of reassessing the historical experience of the countryside and discussing ways and means to implement its social and economic organization and regeneration. Various options are being put forward, often contrasting one another. Some say that the present structures should be abandoned completely, others—that they should be rendered absolute.

The CPSU and the country's government have expressed their attitude to different forms of economic management in rural areas in program documents known to us all. They are in favor of diversity and equal rights. The recent USSR presidential decree on priority tasks with regard to the implementation of land reform stipulated specific steps to be taken in this direction. By spring this year, land must be made available to peasant holdings, leaseholders, and cooperatives, and also for individual subsidiary plots belonging to citizens and enterprises, horticulturalists, and truck gardeners. In the coming weeks and months of inventory taking, some 3-5 million hectares of land are to be allocated for these purposes.

Even from a purely technical standpoint, this represents an enormous amount of painstaking work. The legal side of the matter is no less complicated: Plots of land must be given to all who wish to farm them, without upsetting existing enterprises and going against the will of labor collectives. Soviets at all levels and their institutions and services are going to have their work cut out. Moreover, this work is being done against the background of bitter debate over who should own land.

It is well known that truth is born in debate. On the condition that truth is what is being sought. Unfortunately, opponents often have no wish to listen to or understand one another. "Only 'liberated' collective farms and state farms can feed the country", some say. "Only private ownership of land can make the peasants free!", others retort.

Surely truth is not always to be found at opposite ends of the spectrum? And surely we know more than a few examples of a harvest being requisitioned from a farm or

even from an owner, or of just a token sum being paid for it? That has also happened in our history and practice.

Would it not be better to abandon political ambition and start looking for optimum solutions? Solutions based first and foremost on the opinions of the rural inhabitants concerned. Because, as experience has shown, land reform always fails when it is implemented behind the backs of the peasants and not in their interests.

These sad lessons must not be repeated. When talking about the future of the peasantry, some politicians and economists refer to public opinion and statistics gained from sociological research. That is logical. But there is one aspect of this that cannot fail to cause concern. One set of statistics says that the overwhelming majority of respondents are in favor of collective and state farms. But another set says they are in favor of individual farms [fermerstvo] and private ownership. There is only one truth, as is well known. So where does it lie in this particular case? This kind of manipulation of public opinion does no credit to scientists, scientific institutions, or the mass media.

New political parties, trends, and groups also often exploit public interest in agrarian problems for the purpose of self-advertisement. Unfortunately, you often hear the words "break up," "redistribute," and "sell" used in this respect. Land, determines the future of peoples and states, and cannot be the object of political games. Local soviets and Communists must have more of a say on the matter. However, they often fail to take a principled stand on land issues. They also pay less attention to daily rural concerns.

Meanwhile, spring is around the corner. It will not wait for the end of discussions on different forms of ownership. There is a lot to do. Because of the bad weather back in the fall, some 20 million hectares of land were left unplowed. The situation with seed and repair of equipment is not going well everywhere. Add to this the shortage of fuel, vehicles, spare parts, and other resources and the disorganized state of the supply system and interfarm and interrepublic ties. In the heat of the discussion of global problems, villages have forgotten about "trifles" like selecting cadres for the mass vocations and training them in economics, technology, and production organization.

No collective farm machine operator or farmer can grow and gather the harvest with his bare hands. How can we quickly and reliably equip them for spring? If we do not help them to sow and gather the 1991 harvest on time, the food situation will only worsen. For some reason, some who profess concern for the future of the peasantry make little mention of such prosaic things from our parliamentary tribunes, newspaper pages, and television screens.

Speeches alone, however effective, will not be enough to regenerate our rural areas and develop their economy. We need real action. We must all join forces: cities and villages, radicals and conservatives alike. If only because we all live on the fruits of the earth. It is the same for all of us.

Scientific

Raduga Satellite Launched 28 Feb

LD0103112591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0926 GMT 1 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 1 Mar (TASS)—On 28 February a routine 'Raduga' communications satellite was launched by a 'Proton' rocket. The onboard relay apparatus is designed to insure telephone and telegraph radio communications and the transmission of television programs.

The 'Raduga' satellite has been placed in an orbit almost geostationary with the following parameters: distance from Earth's surface—34,994 km; period of revolution around the Earth—23 hours, 16 minutes; orbital inclination—1.4 degrees.

The apparatus onboard the satellite is working normally.

A command and measuring complex is controlling the satellite.

The operation of the satellite's communications and television apparatus will be carried out in accordance with the planned program.

Plans for Large Commo Satellites Flawed

917Q0058A Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 15 Feb 91 p 2

[Article by correspondent V. Nelyubin: "King of Satellites: Another 'Project of the Century'"]

[Text] Krasnoyarsk—**Once upon a time Khodzha Nasreddin proposed to the shah that for 100 sacks of gold he could teach a donkey to talk in 20 years. The shah agreed, but laid down the condition that if he failed, the wanderer would lose his head. Nasreddin's friends started to bid him their final farewells early, and his enemies rejoiced. Only the teacher of literature remained calm. His reasoning was simple: In 20 years either the shah would have died, or the donkey would have died, or he himself would have died... (An old story)**

One fine day we were pleased to hear the news about a "new success for Soviet science and technology"—the launching of "the world's most powerful" launch vehicle, the Energiya. This space heavyweight had "heaved" 100 tons into orbit around the Earth. One man exclaimed enthusiastically "Well, at least we have got the better of the Americans in space!" I was that person. With the artless simplicity of all the Soviet people I did not suspect that the American Saturn-V launch vehicle had lofted 139 tons(!) way back in the late 1960's.

The fanfares rang out, and the those who had developed the Energiya face a question: What can we do with this space "heavyweight?" This monster had not been cheap. According to the most conservative calculations it had run to 14 billion rubles [R]. This launch vehicle could not now be left with nothing to do! Extensive advertising began for the idea of a "king of satellites"—an 18-ton platform "stuffed" with electronics, a super space telephone exchange for 1.5 million telephone channels, and not a word was said about the fact that the "project of the century" together with the ground stations servicing the "king of satellites" would cost the state budget R50-60 billion.

Today, all the country's enterprises are busy manufacturing equipment for various kinds of communications satellites, and about two tons of this kind of equipment is being launched each year. Three or four times as much equipment is required for one 18-ton platform. And the authors of the "project of the century" are talking about launching three to six of them.

Everyone is aware of the quality of Soviet electronics. For this reason the rare Soviet satellite stays in orbit for five or six years, coming to the end of its useful life sooner by a factor of 1.5 to two than its foreign counterpart. But whereas an ordinary satellite (weighing, incidentally, about two tons) that has reached the end of its useful life can be replaced relatively easily in orbit with another, each launch of an 18-ton platform is incredibly expensive.

... Here we are early in 1993 (it is in that year that the authors of the superproject plan to launch the first "king of satellites" into orbit), and the public is ecstatic. The only trouble is that they have not managed to build the ground stations that ensure the reception and transmission of telephone conversations via the satellite, and have forgotten to build the many thousands of ordinary telephone exchanges and the millions of telephones in apartments. And that means that the "king of satellites" must carry on in space until back on Earth the entire infrastructure has been developed in order to use its splendid facilities. And it will be necessary to wait for oh! such a long time!

Judge for yourselves. The cost of making a single ordinary set of equipment for one subscriber in an average city is R400, and in the countryside it is 2.5 times more. In a satellite system, apart from the ordinary telephone equipment, a subscriber must have an individual or collective transceiver with a parabolic antenna, at a cost of more than R80,000. And we are talking about many millions of subscribers in the space telephone system.

And that is without even mentioning the "minor matters," such as the fact that the parameters of the "king of satellites" are not in compliance with the standards laid down by the International Electronic Communications Union [Mezhdunarodnyy Soyuz Elektrosvyazi], of which our country is an official member, and that the world trend in space equipment design is totally ignored. The Soviets have their pride! Nevertheless, foreign experts abandoned long ago the idea of developing a monster satellite. All bets have been laid on increasing the carrying capacity (up to 120,000 telephone channels) on communications satellites already developed by improving the onboard equipment.

In May 1989 the "project of the century" was discussed at a session of the USSR Council of Ministers. At that time, for the first time in the history of our space sector it was decided to hold a competition for plans for a promising communications system. A state expert commission led by Academician Yu.V. Gulyayev was set up under the USSR State Planning Committee. It was planned to announce the results last year, but the dots have still not been placed over the "i's."

The Energiya Scientific Production Association, a firm engaged in the development of manned space vehicles, offered one plan. The Energiya and the Buran were developed there, and the "king of satellites" project. Another association—the Scientific Production Association for Applied Mechanics, led by Academician M.F. Reshetnev—has developed virtually all Soviet communications, navigation, and geodetic satellites.

...The final "bell" was sounded recently when the Salyut-7 station started to fall back to Earth. And although according to the official version it was caused by a burst of solar activity, the experts know what led to this result and the launch of a new orbital station, the Mir station, in 1986; the Soviet space people reported to the latest high forum. There were no facilities for simultaneous operation of two such large objects, and Salyut-7 was sent to the higher layers of the atmosphere for mothballing. Even then the experts were predicting that by using the fuel remaining on the station it could have been landed on Earth, promising that otherwise Salyut-7 would make an uncontrolled reentry early in 1991. They brushed this aside like a troublesome fly. But as we see, in space a scientific calculation is much more effective than acute political flair. But is this true only for space?

Military

Yazov Interviewed on Gulf, Pact, China Ties

OW2702192591 Moscow International Service in Mandarin 0100 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Text] Listeners and friends, Soviet Defense Minister Yazov has said that had Saddam Husayn fully accepted Soviet President Gorbachev's peace proposal from its inception, the situation in the Persian Gulf would be very different.

Answering Radio Moscow special correspondent Plevakho's questions on 26 February, Marshal Yazov highlighted the following:

Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz ought to have understood the existing situation in Kuwait and Iraq; nevertheless, he continued to put forward unacceptable

demands. The Soviet defense minister held that Saddam's strategy was one of buying time. He has targeted the destruction of Kuwait's material wealth and turned Kuwait into a desert. Saddam's defeat became inevitable the moment the ground war began.

After he reiterated the Soviet Union's principled stand on the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions, Marshal Yazov branded the arbitrary assertions by certain American publications as propaganda aimed at creating suspicion of the Soviet Union. Contrary to these assertions, the Soviet Union did not supply guided missiles or any other military equipment to Iraq. The Soviet defense minister stressed that all Soviet military consultants had left Iraq before the Gulf war broke out.

Yazov returned from Budapest recently, where a meeting of the Warsaw Pact's Political Consultative Committee adopted a resolution on ending the pact's military activities. Our station reporter's second question to the Soviet Defense Minister Yazov was related to this matter.

Yazov pointed out: During the course of the meeting, all participants unanimously agreed that the military aspect of the Warsaw Pact should be canceled. The political aspect of the pact will still be useful for the time being, I believe; the pact will remain valid for a time.

The Soviet defense minister added that no one should be left with the impression that a vacuum has been created as a result of the resolution's adoption in Budapest or that the Soviet Union's defense capabilities would be weakened. All troops in East Europe will be withdrawn from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Germany, and Poland and will be stationed in Soviet territory. We certainly have sufficient capabilities and tactics for self-defense. Today we see no other way of defending our own country.

The question of the role of NATO now that the Warsaw Pact's military functions have been terminated also arose. There is the argument that if NATO has no enemy and no antagonist then the need for NATO ceases to exist. Marshal Yazov believes that the time will come when NATO would be disbanded as a military organization. We must keep in mind that we are currently discussing European joint security and the building of a European home.

Answering our station special correspondent's questions, the Soviet defense minister pointed out: The hope for continued military cooperation on the basis of bilateral relations came up during a Budapest meeting with East European defense ministers.

Yazov discussed Soviet-Chinese relations in detail. Our station's special correspondent Plevakho said: There is much speculation about your upcoming visit to China. I would like to ask about this. What role will the military play in the development of Soviet-Chinese relations? From your perspective, has the stabilization of Soviet-Chinese relations been felt throughout the entire Asia-Pacific region's military and political spectrum?

Marshal Yazov said: I think that our relations with China, military relations included, influence the stability of all Southeast Asia. We must bear in mind that the Soviet Union and China are two big nations and play a decisive role in many issues. We must mention that China is currently making several fundamental decisions in order to substantially reduce the strength of its own armed forces. For our part, we have also done a lot to let the Chinese people see that we have no intention of invading their territory. We have replaced infantry units on camels with permanent machine gun and artillery divisions; these are not able to make moves on the Soviet-Chinese border. We see that the Chinese side is taking similar measures. The Soviet defense minister said: We believe that our relations are normal. As for my visit to China, although we are now busy and working under the strain of withdrawing troops from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Germany, and Poland, we will strive to reach a definite agreement with China during a visit to China in March.

I would like to add that I have never been to China. It will be interesting to see how personnel in the People's Liberation Army live and train. Moreover, we have many past friendships between us. For example, some Chinese attended (Fudongzhi) Military College with me. [Words indistinct] (?Zhu De), and other prominent Chinese activists visited our military colleges, but, later, disputes divided us. After Gorbachev's visit to China, contacts between the two sides have been very good.

The Soviet defense minister stressed: Given Gorbachev's upcoming visit to Japan, I believe we will be able to make great political strides in the Asia-Pacific.

Soviet Defense Minister Yazov ended the interview by wishing our listeners a peaceful life, for only peace can guarantee a tranquil and happy life for the people. Yazov said: As such, anything which might set off a confrontation or a war is unacceptable.

Gromov Commands Moscow Law Enforcement Exercise

LD2802180991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1620 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow, 28 Feb (TASS)—On 26 and 27 February an exercise was held in Moscow to practice effective ways of dealing with extreme situations and the tactics to be adopted by detachments responsible for maintaining public order. Detachments for the maintenance of public order and officers in charge of units and detachments of USSR Interior Ministry troops responsible for guarding and escorting persons taken into custody were commanded by USSR First Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Col-gen Boris Gromov.

Another goal of this routine, regional exercise was to establish closer cooperation between various services in

the handling of incidents at special militia establishments and attacks on the premises of militia bodies in the city districts, and on people's courts and convoys.

According to the press center of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs, the objectives of the exercise were carried out completely.

More on Moiseyev Remarks at Armed Forces Day

PM2702173191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Feb 91 First Edition pp 1, 3

[Correspondent report: "On Occasion of Anniversary"]

[Text] On 23 February Army General M.A. Moiseyev, chief of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff and USSR first deputy defense minister, held a reception to mark the 73d anniversary of the Soviet Army and Navy.

The reception was attended by Soviet military chiefs, generals, admirals, and officers of the Soviet Armed Forces, labor veterans, and representatives of state and public organizations.

The guests included military, naval, and air attaches at foreign embassies.

Army Gen. M.A. Moiseyev welcomed those gathered.

In his speech he said that for the Soviet people and their servicemen 23 February is not just a date but represents the very history of our country, at whose sources the Armed Forces have been standing reliable and constant guard for many decades.

This year the traditional nationwide holiday is being observed in a complex military and political situation. War is blazing in the Persian Gulf area for the second month now. This region has essentially been transformed into a test range for modern models of weapons and hardware, and for the perfection of new forms and methods of preparing and prosecuting military actions.

There are complex processes under way in our country too. Despite the temporary failures, radical transformations in politics and economics and the people's social and spiritual lives are inevitable. That is why civic and national accord, unity of actions, and a resolve to protect the social choice that the people made in October 1917 are more topical and vitally important than ever before.

The Armed Forces are now in an extremely complex situation. The Army was perhaps the first to feel the full weight of the prevailing situation in the country. Certain forces are inflaming anti-Army hysteria and are trying to place the Army at odds with the people. I state with all responsibility that the Army was, is, and will always be with its people, and is serving and will continue to serve only their interests and the interests of the country's security, Army Gen. M.A. Moiseyev stressed. This was also confirmed by the rally of Moscow's working people and servicemen from the capital's garrison on Manezh Square.

The processes of renewal that unfolded in the country, he went on to say, have inevitably been reflected in society's entire military organization. Military reform became an objective necessity. It started in 1987, when a new defense doctrine was adopted in our country.

It resulted in the conclusion and implementation of the Treaty on Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range missiles, the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the unilateral reduction of the Armed Forces by half-a-million men, and the withdrawal of our troops from East European countries and Mongolia now under way. One of its achievements was the signing in Paris of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. We also link it with the forthcoming signing of a treaty with the United States on the reduction of strategic offensive weapons. Large-scale measures are being implemented in the reorganization of the Armed Forces and in deepening the processes of democratization and glasnost in the Army and Navy.

As we observe the 73d anniversary of the Armed Forces, Army Gen. M.A. Moiseyev said, we are, figuratively speaking, forming a guard of honor for those who, 50 years ago, fought to the death at our western borders and who covered themselves with everlasting glory in the fighting for the motherland. It would be hard to overestimate the scale and significance of the nationwide fight against the enemy. After all, as a result of the bitter fighting not just our fatherland but also the countries of East Europe were liberated from the fascist plague. And no matter how much people may try today to falsify history and erase from the peoples' memories the gratitude for the liberating mission of the Soviet soldiers, no one has the right to do this. Our great power endured then and is fully capable of not discrediting its honor and dignity now, at the new historical stage.

Today the Soviet Union, steadfastly and consistently pursuing a new political line, is doing everything it can to make the world more stable and secure so that all peoples can unite in a common desire for mutual understanding and good-neighborliness. This is our long-term policy and we will never change it.

Today the threat of war has receded, but it has not been completely eliminated. The military danger persists. In the face of this our state needs sufficiently powerful armed forces, equipped with modern hardware, which are capable of repulsing aggression regardless of its source.

In conclusion Army Gen. M.A. Moiseyev expressed his belief that the servicemen of the Soviet Army and Navy will continue fulfilling their constitutional duty with honor, and will make a worthy contribution to strengthenng the defense might of our country.

The reception took place a warm, friendly atmosphere.

Moscow, Other Cities Mark Military Holiday

PM2802103391 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Feb 91 First Edition p 1

[TASS and unattributed reports: "The People Honor Their Defenders"]

[Text] TASS—A ceremonial meeting of representatives of Moscow working people and servicemen from the capital's garrison to mark the 73d anniversary of the Soviet Army and Navy was held 22 February in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses.

Army General K.A. Kochetov, USSR first deputy minister of defense; Hero of the Soviet Union, Marshal of Aviation A.P. Silantyev, chairman of the Soviet War Veterans Committee; D.A. Mazepin, former internationalist serviceman; and others gave addresses at the meeting. They stressed that providing reliable security for the socialist state and all Soviet peoples was and still is the main mission of the USSR Armed Forces. The Army and Navy have the same hopes and desires as the people. In this connection the campaign aimed at discrediting the Armed Forces was condemned. The Army was and is the people's creation, and the servicemen's military work provides a reliable guarantee of a peaceful life for Soviet people.

Taking part in the meeting were: M.S. Gorbachev, G.I. Yanayev, A.I. Lukyanov, V.S. Pavlov, and D.T. Yazov; military leaders, representatives of public organizations, and war, labor, and USSR Armed Forces veterans. [TASS report ends]

Ceremonial meetings to mark the 73d anniversary of the Soviet Armed Forces were held in many other cities in the country.

In Leningrad servicemen were greeted on the holiday by A.A. Sobchak, chairman of Leningrad City Soviet, and representatives of labor collectives, war and labor veterans, and students from the Suvorov Military School.

In Kiev the following participated in a ceremonial meeting: L.M. Kravchuk, chairman of the Ukrainian SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet; S.I. Gurenko, first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee; and V.P. Fokin, chairman of the Ukrainian SSR Council of Ministers.

N.I. Dementey, chairman of the Belorussian SSR Supreme Soviet, and V.F. Kebich, chairman of the Belorussian Council of Ministers, participated in a meeting held in Minsk.

In Baku servicemen were cordially greeted by A.N. Mutalibov, president of Azerbaijan, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo, and first secretary of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan Central Committee.

I.A. Karimov, president of the Uzbek SSR, greeted servicemen from Turkestan and Armed Forces veterans on the occasion of the holiday.

Despite severe frost, a rally of working people to mark Army and Navy Day was held in Chita on the downtown V.I. Lenin Square.

Ceremonial public meetings were held in Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius, Dneprodzerzhinsk, and many other cities.

RSFSR Defense Committee's Purpose Discussed

PM2202100391 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 21 Feb 91 First Edition p 1

[Interview with Army General M.A. Moiseyev, chief of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff, and Colonel General K.I. Kobets, chairman of the RSFSR State Committee for Defense and Security, by unnamed TASS correspondent; place and date not given; first paragraph is editorial introduction: "Strengthening the Country's Defense Together"]

[Text] An RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] State Committee for Defense and Security has been set up within the Russian Government. Various articles have appeared in the Soviet and foreign mass media in this connection, dealing with its tasks and the future of the USSR Armed Forces. Army General M.A. Moiseyev, chief of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff, and Colonel General K.I. Kobets, chairman of the state committee, answered a TASS correspondent's questions on this subject.

[TASS correspondent] How do you perceive the tasks of the RSFSR State Committee for Defense and Security?

Col. Gen. K. Kobets: I would like to say straightaway that in forming the committee we are not by any means setting ourselves the task of creating a Russian Army. It intends to exercise its powers within the framework of the unified USSR Armed Forces. In my view, the objective necessity for this approach is dictated by historical, economic, political, and purely military factors. Today it is right to talk not only about the need for and expediency of, but also the benefits of unified Armed Forces both for the Union as a whole and for each republic individually.

Army Gen. M. Moiseyev: In the political context the creation of republican armed formations is fraught with the danger of transferring interethnic conflicts from the "cold" to the "hot" stage. This is a sure way to civil war in the current tense domestic political situation in certain regions.

Take the foreign policy aspect. Dividing up the Armed Forces along nationality lines may cause serious complications in relations with our partners at the talks on strengthening peace and security on the planet.

It is quite obvious from the economic viewpoint that only a state with considerable resources and a powerful

defense industry complex can maintain a modern army and provide it with material and technical equipment and trained cadres.

Take the military aspect of the problem. Creating national armies would mean destroying the integrity and reliability of the entire defense system, including the control of strategic nuclear forces, lowering the military command's prompt response to emergencies, and reducing the Armed Forces' combat readiness and combat ability.

Each of the above factors—like questions relating to the country's defense as a whole—require the most well-considered, responsible approach during the preparation of the new Union Treaty. In our view, the treaty must clearly enshrine that questions of ensuring USSR state security, organizing defense and the leadership of the USSR Armed Forces and USSR Border Guard Troops, Internal Troops, and Railroad Troops, declaring war, and concluding peace are exclusively within the USSR's jurisdiction. In addition, the other powers exercised by the center and the republics on defense questions must be reflected more fully.

[TASS correspondent] In your view, what is the role of the union republics in the country's defense structure?

Col. Gen. K. Kobets: We back the creation of corresponding republic committees with a view to effectively exercising defense powers, and also for contacts and collaboration with union organs in charge of military questions and, of course, with the USSR Defense Ministry. It is virtually impossible to resolve the tasks that will, as a result of the Union Treaty, be placed under the joint jurisdiction of the Union and the republics without creating structures of this kind.

At the same time the republic committees must organize work to carry out on their territory the defense tasks for whose resolution republic organs of power and management are responsible, for example: Preparing young people for military service, implementing the draft, solving servicemen's social problems, directing the republics' civil defense, and other questions.

Army Gen. M. Moiseyev: I perceive the union republics' competence on questions of military building as follows.

All republics take part in elaborating the Union's military policy, implementing measures to organize and ensure defense, resolving questions of the deployment and activity of troops and military installations on their republic's territory, establishing unified procedure for the draft and the performance of military service, organizing the national economy's preparation for mobilization, shaping the Union's defense budget, and allotting material and technical resources for defense needs.

At the same time they are responsible for the execution of USSR defense legislation on their territory and for the implementation of set mobilization tasks by all organs, enterprises, institutions, organizations, officials, and citizens under their jurisdiction.

Col. Gen. K. Kobets: The range of defense questions resolved by the republics may be extremely broad and diverse. I think that, in addition to the above tasks, our committee will have to coordinate the work of local organs of management, enterprises, institutions, and organizations to perform mobilization tasks, to supply material and technical resources and food, to provide social security for servicemen and Army and Navy veterans, to work with young draftees, and to maintain collaboration with military commissariats and troop units.

I consider it expedient to set up defense councils in republics, krays, and oblasts, which could be chaired by republic presidents, Supreme Soviet chairmen, or the chairmen of kray and oblast soviets of people's deputies.

Army Gen. M. Moiseyev: Quite right. The republics will now be able to train citizens for military service, implement the draft, assist in the work of military commissariats, and finance defense measures assigned to them by USSR legislation. They will have to take steps to meet the requirements of troop units and institutions stationed on the republic's territory concerning accommodation, billeting, the supply of material resources, provision of services, and the creation of the requisite housing and daily life conditions for servicemen and their families.

A special organ is being set up at the USSR Armed Forces General Staff for collaboration with the Russian State Committee for Defense and Security and with similar organs in other republics. The mechanism of this collaboration and the structure and extent of tasks are still to be worked out by joint efforts.

Col. Gen. K. Kobets: I also consider it expedient to step up the union republics' role in training specialists for the USSR Armed Forces and in implementing a series of other measures which are currently dealt with by the USSR DOSAAF [Voluntary Society for the Promotion of the Army, Aviation, and Navy] system.

Army Gen. M. Moiseyev: The adoption of the Law on Defense of the USSR in the form in which we are submitting it would be an important element in our motherland's entire defense policy.

Baltic Republics

Lithuania Deems Union Laws 'Illegal'

LD2802164291 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1430 GMT 28 Feb 91

["Edited version" of decision adopted by the Lithuanian Supreme Council, read at Supreme Council session by Deputy R. Ozolas—live]

[Text] As the Soviet Union continues to carry out acts of aggression directed against the Republic of Lithuania, and the possibility of the active occupation remains, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania, recalling that under any circumstances only the laws adopted by the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania are valid, resolves:

1. All the USSR structures of control or those set up by their collaborators in Lithuania are illegal. All the laws which have been passed, decrees adopted, or any other legal acts which are applied to Lithuania, and decisions on actions and instructions of officials are invalid.

2. All the institutions of administration of the Republic of Lithuania and their officials must not cooperate with the occupiers, and persons who execute [the orders of] this regime.

3. In the event of active occupation, citizens of the Republic of Lithuania are urged to adopt resistance of disobedience and nonviolence. They are urged to adopt the principle of political and social noncooperation as the main means in the fight for independence.

4. Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania have the right to defend themselves using all ways and means; to defend other people as well as the property of Lithuania against the violators, against acts of violence, or other illegal acts carried out by the occupation regime.

5. The beginning of the active occupation and of the general political resistance stipulated by it is determined by the situation when the lawfully elected Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania is restricted by force as a supreme authority of the state.

The start of organized resistance is announced, if such possibility is available, by the Provisional Leadership of Defense of the Republic of Lithuania.

The draft decision was adopted unanimously.

Lithuanian Official Views 'Useful' Moscow Talks

LD2802144591 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Statement by C. Stankevicius, deputy chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Council, on 28 February in Vilnius following his return from talks in Moscow with V. Doguzhiyev, USSR first deputy prime minister; in the "Lithuania Today" program—recorded]

[Text] Mr. Doguzhiyev told us that he understood our concern [over buildings occupied by the military] and promised that he would see to it without delay that the occupied buildings are returned and that normal conditions for the meeting of the working groups are set up.

Of course, we also spoke about the objective of the negotiations and we said that we hoped that these negotiations would lead to a stage as soon as possible in which a specific solution can be made. We said we hoped that the USSR will renew the recognition of the Republic of Lithuania and that legal relations based on the treaty which existed for 20 years—until the year 1940—will be reaffirmed.

Deputy Prime Minister Doguzhiyev stressed that their delegation will make efforts during the negotiations to persuade the Lithuanian delegation that Lithuania should remain in the composition of the Soviet Union.

Well, an exchange of opinions of this sort took place and the meeting was rather useful because some points have now been clarified. Now we have to wait and see what the responsive actions will be, i.e. return of the installations.

Sees No Grounds for Optimism

LD2802175491 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1200 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Interview with C. Stankevicius, deputy chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Council, by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[Excerpt]

[Correspondent] Mr. Stankevicius, about two weeks ago in the Soviet press there was suddenly talk from fairly official persons about the idea that Lithuania could secede from the Soviet Union, but within the frontiers of 1938. During your meeting with Doguzhiyev, was there no mention of this?

[Stankevicius] There was no discussion of such matters. There were no talks between leaders, but it was simply a meeting about circumstances for the negotiations. We did not talk about this matter, and we did not talk about these statements.

[Correspondent] As I see it, you came back from Moscow more optimistic than when you left.

[Stankevicius] No, I suppose that there is not yet any grounds for optimism. We must wait for some actual results. When the buildings are handed back, then some sort of genuine optimism may appear. At present, I view positively the very fact that our meeting was held, that we had contacts. That is useful.

[Correspondent] Did you not determine any times for the future meetings, or will they be established as a matter of routine?

[Stankevicius] We spoke about times, and said that, (?we stressed) that, as I understood it, Mr. Doguzhiyev agreed that these times will still depend on how soon these buildings are released, so the specific times will be established as a matter of routine.

Lithuania Notes Danish 'De Facto' Recognition

LD2802220691 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Russian 2130 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] The last joyous piece of news today is that, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Denmark has recognized the Government of Lithuania de facto. A protocol has been signed on interstate cooperation. It was signed today in Copenhagen by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Denmark Uffe Ellemen-Jensen, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania Algirdas Saudargas.

When circumstances permit, it is stated, Denmark and Lithuania will restore full diplomatic ties. This is noted in the interstate protocol.

This is very pleasant news. We hope that Denmark will be followed by other countries of the Nordic Council.

Union Referendum's Holding in Lithuania Urged

PM2802161191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Feb 91 Union Edition p 2

[Nikolay Lashkevich report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Referendum in Lithuania in Question"]

[Text] At a joint sitting on Monday the Lithuanian Republic Supreme Soviet Presidium and government adopted a statement on the all-Union referendum.

As people will know, Lithuania has refused to hold the 17 March referendum on its territory. The republic leadership's statement spells out its position on this question. It notes that since 11 March 1990 no laws or resolutions by Union organs have been valid on its territory or binding in any way on its inhabitants. "Therefore the efforts of the USSR state structures and the CPSU bodies to influence and pressure Lithuania to compel its people to take part in voting during another state's referendum is nothing less than gross interference in the Lithuanian Republic's internal affairs and a new encroachment on its sovereignty..."

As we can see, the Lithuanian leadership is once again categorically rejecting a decision by Soviet authority in conformity with its own political logic.

But what is to be done about the USSR citizens living in Lithuania who do not want to obtain Lithuanian citizenship but do want to express their attitude to our country's future? The Supreme Soviet Presidium and government point out a solution: "The Lithuanian Republic could discuss and duly rule on requests by the governments of the sovereign Union republics and the government of the USSR regarding the authorization of assistance to authorized consular representatives to organize voting by...citizens of theirs permanently or temporarily resident on the territory of Lithuania who have freely expressed their desire to take part in the referendum."

In other words, the USSR should seek authorization to hold a referendum in Lithuania and probably send "consular representatives," who will be given assistance in organizing voting. In the estimation of opposition political forces, such harsh conditions, which do not take full account of today's realities, will scarcely help reduce tension in relations between Lithuania and the USSR or facilitate the upcoming bilateral talks.

Lithuanian CP Criticizes Press Suspension

LD2802103491 Moscow TASS in English 0738 GMT 28 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Serafim Bykhun]

[Text] Vilnius February 28 TASS—The Lithuanian Communist Party leadership has called for "condemning the offensive on glasnost and democracy and giving every kind of support to Lithuanian Communist newspapers".

The party central committee secretariat's statement followed an order by the republican interior ministry's press control department to suspend the printing of all the party's newspapers as published by "an organisation not registered in Lithuania".

Such claims are "juggling with facts", the secretariat's statement said. It said the registration was confirmed by the Lithuanian parliament's December 7, 1989 resolution "on political parties", which recognised the new communist party as the successor in rights to the Lithuanian Communist Party registered on June 25, 1940.

Equipment in Vilnius TV Building Destrooyed

LD2802210891 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 2000 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] Disturbing information has reached us today: Soldiers destroying radio isotope-measuring elements have been noticed at the occupied radio and television building in Vilnius. These elements are used for the prevention of fire and used to be kept in safes. Today they are becoming dangerous because plutonium radio isotopes are spread. Apart from that, it has been noticed that many instruments containing mercury have been smashed: its vapor is toxic. Thus the occupied building is becoming a dangerous place for the health of people inside it.

The republican medical and epidemiological station should take interest in this. As is known, the official representatives of Lithuanian radio and television are not allowed into the occupied premises.

Lithuanian Proposals to USSR Reported

PM2802150391 Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 28 Feb 91 p 1

[IAN report: "Lithuania Proposes Talks"]

[Text] In the next few days a document entitled "Lithuanian Supreme Soviet Proposals to the USSR Supreme Soviet" will be circulated among Union legislature deputies. It points out that Lithuania intends to build exclusively good-neighborly relations and maintain comprehensive economic, humanitarian, and other ties with the USSR. In this connection the Lithuanian legislature proposes that the USSR Supreme Soviet assess the Armed Forces' illegal actions in the republic—particularly the events of 13 January 1991—and instruct the USSR executive to immediately return to the Lithuanian Republic the state installations that were seized by the Army.

The Lithuanian Supreme Soviet proposes that the USSR Supreme Soviet's decisions of 3 August 1940 to incorporate Lithuania within the USSR be acknowledged as invalid in law and that a USSR state delegation be instructed to embark on talks with a Lithuanian Republic delegation with a view to recognizing Lithuanian independence and concluding the relevant treaty between the two states.

KGB Prior Knowledge of Jan Events Alleged

LD2702170791 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1105 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Report by Dora Petkauskaite]

[Text] A large and very interesting article under the title Coup D'etat was published in the latest issue of the newspaper FORUMAS. The subtitle says that the shock troops arrived in Lithuania last April. Here are some excerpts from the article by Arvydas Lekavicius:

The writer says: The bloody events in January have been discussed in various circles. Plenty of versions are being voiced. The leaders of the USSR KGB branch in Lithuania declare that they did not have anything to do with these events. However, from the Dzerzhinsky Conservatoire—and that term is in quotes [KGB headquarters is situated next to Vilnius Conservatoire]—information of a different sort is appearing. Petras Jonaitis, senior officer at the Lithuanian KGB First Section, the intelligence branch, has supplied the editors of FORUMAS with interesting information. Names and addresses have been changed for security reasons.

Jonaitis said that in September 1989 an order was received from Moscow to prepare the plan for future mass actions in Lithuania. This was carried out by the deputy head of the intelligence department of the committee. Complying with the demands of the leaders from Moscow, actions by the KGB action groups and military units stationed in Belorussia and Lithuania were presented in the plan in minute detail. This included possible directions for the movements of tanks.

I would not like to blame the officer who was in charge of the preparation of this plan. He simply did not believe that this plan could ever be implemented. You must understand that the committee is as bureaucratic an organization as thousands of civilian offices. We used to set up countless projects on Moscow's orders. These would normally be collecting dust in the drawers. Often those in charge wanted to get rid of the task as soon as possible and made it up as they went along. Unfortunately, the destiny of the above plan was different. The plan was authorized by Eismuntas, then chief of the Lithuanian KGB. The final approval of the Moscow plan [words indistinct]. There is no doubt that Kryuchkov knew about it, because without his knowledge or instructions a special unit of shock troops cannot be sent to any operation.

These shock troops arrived in Lithuania in April of last year, the article adds. These troops were stationed in various places—in Trakai Rayon, the military commissariat was situated in the Kirtimai area. Right before the bloody events, these troops were moved to the northern townlet [a military garrison in the northern part of Vilnius]. Local KGB officers paved the way for their work. This was undertaken by a group the KGB officers headed by General (Sablin), deputy chairman of the USSR KGB Lithuanian branch.

Answering the question of which special services of the Republic of Lithuania were doing in this situation, the workers at the State Security Department answered the journalist's question by saying: Special services in Lithuania fell short of professionalism. No specific tasks were carried out by the security department, let alone strategic matters. Why was the work not effective? First of all, it was due to the lack of professionalism. Among the employees at the department who previously worked for the KGB there is no one who is experienced in counterintelligence or intelligence. Most of the people working now at the State Security Department worked as interrogators at the so-called ideological service. In other words, they did not do anything. Almost none of those now employed by the State Security Department have any experience working in an aggressive environment or in underground conditions when the situation is practically controlled by special services of another country and an active resistance is launched. The legal basis of the activity of the department has not yet been established.

Then there is the last question: What do you think the future events will be? Can bloodshed be expected? The answer is: I do not think so. After the defeat, the KGB is changing its tactics. Now attempts will be made to set the legislature and the entire Lithuanian nation against each other. Various means will be used for this; for example, the KGB secret service may be made public. No doubt we will know the exact list of the KGB informers and

agents who disrupted their links with the KGB. Believe me, these are quite numerous, even among [word indistinct]. Among the agents of the KGB there are people who occupy very high posts. Some of them have been supplying the information to the chekists even today. I would not like to understimate the activity of the special services, but active functioning of the Security Department could block the way to these and other provocations. Such institutions are indispensable for the defense of our fragile independence, but thse institutions must become professional.

The above are comments from an article by Arvydas Lekavicius published by the newspaper FORUMAS.

Swiss Ministry Says No Need for Baltic Aid

LD2602225191 Moscow TASS in English 2125 GMT 26 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Vitaliy Makarchev]

[Text] Geneva February 26 TASS—A Swiss Foreign Ministry delegation, who have just returned after a tour of Soviet Baltic republics, reported that there is no need for urgent humanitarinan aid to these republics, Marco Cameroni, a spokesman for the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs, announced today.

At the same time he emphasised that the USSR—at Bern's request made under an agreement within the CSCE framework—provided data on the state of affairs in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

These republics do not need an urgent humanitarian aid which was requested by the authorities of Lithuania and Latvia, pointed out Swiss experts who spent more than a week in the Baltics.

Along with that they prepared projects for cooperation between the Baltic republics and Switzerland in education and cultural exchanges.

The Soviet Union assured Switzerland that it seeks to ensure human rights and basic freedoms throughout its territory and intends to restore tranquility in the Baltic republics and avoid violence, Cameroni stressed.

Savisaar Predicts 70 Percent for Independence

LD0103130991 Moscow TASS in English 1240 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Albert Maloveryan]

[Text] Tallinn March 1 TASS—Estonian Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar believes that about 70 per cent of particiipants in a poll, which is scheduled to take place on March 3, will favour regaining state independence for Estonia.

An All-Union referendum on the future of the USSR as a Union state will be held on March 17, but the Estonian Supreme Soviet decided to conduct a poll of its own. Ballot stations have been opened for voting since February 28 for those who, for some reasons, will not be able to express their attitude on the issue on March 3. Ballot stations were also opened in Moscow, Helsinki and Stockholm for citizens who are now outside Estonia.

The idea of holding a referendum of its own was met with disapproval in the north-east of the republic where non-Estonians predominantly live. They decided to conduct alternative polls to clarify people's attitude to Estonia as a sovereign state within the USSR.

This poll will be held in the cities of Narva and Kokhtla-Yarve also on March 3 and will offer voters two ballot papers. In the city of Sillamyae, the third largest industrial centre in the north-east of the republic, where non-Estonians live, the poll already took place last Saturday and Sunday. Eighty nine per cent of those polled favoured preserving Estonia as a sovereign republic within the USSR.

The republican government invited representatives from many countries and international organisations as observers at the poll.

USSR Committee To Finance Estonia 17 Mar Poll

LD0103074591 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0700 GMT 1 Mar 91

[From the NOVOSTI press agency]

[Text] Talks between representatives of the parliamentary opposition in Estonia at the USSR Central Electoral Commission concerning the holding of the all-Union referendum in the republic on 17 March have concluded successfully. The commission's leadership has agreed to finance the referendum's organization.

Since the Estonian legislature had declined to hold the referendum, its prospects appeared more than problematic. However, the commission's decision keeps alive the hope that the all-Union referendum will take place in Estonia too.

Official on Referendum Voting Security Plans

LD2802140191 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 1000 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent Mati Kirotar on 28 February meeting of Tallinn City Council, including interview with Mati Palu, chairman of Tallinn City Election Committee, on security for voters—recorded]

[Excerpts] At 1000 this morning a meeting of the Tallinn City Council opened. Even before the agenda was proposed and endorsed, the council members listened to information on the upcoming referendum. Mati Palu, chairman of the Tallinn City Election Committee, summed up what has been done up to now and what the present progress of the referendum is—we know that preliminary voting has opened. [passage omitted]

[Kirotar] How are our polling stations altogether protected, I mean in the sense of security, because on several occasions there have been questions asked if it is at all possible to protect the places where voting takes place so that nothing should happen, so that people enjoy a feeling of security?

[Palu] Tomorrow evening, starting at 1800, police representatives will enter all our polling stations; that is, they will begin a watch at stations at night. On the day of the election—on the 3d—our home defense will deal with this. Of course, even at the moment polling station commissions take care to maintain a watch and ensure that voting slips and other materials on the premises of polling stations are kept safe, out of reach.

[Kirotar] To conclude: there are altogether 342 polling stations in Tallinn. There are also polling stations in Moscow, Stockholm, and Helsinki which come under Tallinn. Tell me, will any of our representatives be going to those towns outside Estonia?

[Palu] Apart from Moscow, Stockholm, and Helsinki, there are also two polling stations in Tyumen Oblast, and our representatives have already left for that destination. All Estonian people will then have an opportunity to vote there. In Moscow a polling station commission has been set up, likewise there is one in Stockholm, where voting slips have already been delivered, too. A representative will also go to Helsinki.

Poll: Latvian Majority Favors Independence

LD0103130291 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 2006 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Summary] The Club of Directors of Riga, together with the Association for the Promotion of Information Technology of Latvia, have conducted a pre-poll poll. Preliminary results show that almost 80 percent of workers in Riga polled will vote yes to independence. Most of the no voters are worried that independence will be followed by an economic crisis. Nevertheless, almost 50 percent of Russians will vote yes. Almost 97 percent of Latvians will vote yes, and the number of non-Russians and non-Latvians answering in Russian was a similar figure to that. Almost one quarter of Russians are still undecided on how to vote.

"In conclusion it only remains to hope that these forecasts will indeed come about."

Foreign Observers Arrive for Latvian Poll

LD2802101191 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 0530 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] The first international observers of the 3 March public poll are arriving. The largest number of international observers to be announced comes from Sweden: 14. The Czechoslovak Republic will be represented by 11 people, Norway and Denmark by 10 each, the European Parliament by five, Finland by four and France by three observers. Several more countries have announced numbers of observers that are imprecise at the moment, and so far none of the observers has experienced any complications in getting an entry visa.

Advance Voting Takes Place in Latvia

LD0103042891 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 2030 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] Advance voting in the poll of the inhabitants of the Republic of Latvia is continuing. Today marked the fifth day in which inhabitants of Latvia could reply to a question on the wish to live in a democratic and independent state of Latvia.

Although the so-called advance voting is taking place, the central election committee is not summing up the information on those who have already voted. The committee only notes that, for the time being, the voting is taking place without any notable excesses or transgressions.

Various public figures continue to express their predictions in connection with the forthcoming ballot. Dozortsev, the well-known public figure and deputy of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia, expressed an optimistic prognosis, predicting that more than 80 percent of Latvians and over 50 percent of non-Latvians, of those who will participate in the poll, will vote for an independent Latvia.

Latvian Communist Party Alleges Ballot Rigging

LD2702134291 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 27 Feb 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] The Communist Party of Latvia has made a statement devoted to the referendum on the future of Latvia due in the republic on 3 March. The statement says that additional false voting papers have been stockpiled and will be used to preserve the current leadership of Latvia in power.

Latvian Paper Warns of Secession Consequences

PM2802145591 Riga SOVETSKAYA LATVIYA in Russian 21 Feb 91 p 1

[Unattributed notice: "Dear Inhabitant of Riga!"]

[Text] The referendum is being held 3 March. If you vote for the wording suggested in the ballot paper, it means that you are in favor of the republic's seceding from the USSR, in which case the following awaits you:

1. A 40-percent drop in living standards owing to an unchecked rise in prices (republic Council of Ministers forecast for 1991).

2. One in four workers in the city's industry will lose his job in the near future (republic economists' forecast).

3. Eighty thousand families waiting in line for improved living conditions and 3,100 families living in unsafe apartment blocks will lose the opportunity to obtain accommodation, since construction of new living accommodation in the city has been temporarily suspended (Riga Gorispolkom [city soviet executive committee] decision).

4. A ban on teaching in the Russian language for the Russian-speaking population in higher educational establishments, technical institutes, and other educational institutions (Latvian Republic draft law on education).

Only you personally, inhabitant of Riga, can decide your fate! If you want to work, study, and have some prospect of obtaining accommodation, cross out the word "yes" on the ballot paper 3 March.

Latvian CP Demands End to Rising Terrorism

PM2802144791 Riga SOVETSKAYA LATVIYA in Russian 15 Feb 91 p 1

[Statement by the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau dated 13 February 1991]

[Text] In its 20 and 27 December 1990 statements the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau brought the dangerous rise of terrorism, reflected in the numerous bombing incidents in Riga and the republic, to the attention of the government and the law enforcement organs and expressed the hope that the government would concentrate the efforts of all the competent organs on discovering and bringing to justice the perpetrators of these criminal acts and on preventing similar acts in the future.

Unfortunately, the aforementioned statements by the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau were not sufficiently well heeded by those to whom they were addressed.

On the evening of 12 February 1991 there was a massive terrorist explosion in the immediate vicinity of the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee building and the apartment blocks located along side it. One militiaman on traffic duty was injured in the blast. The apartment blocks and the Central Committee building were severely damaged. It is sheer good fortune that no lives were lost.

It is becoming clear that the government and the leaders of the organs of law and order are incapable of shielding society from the criminal activities of those who continue to terrorize the population.

In this respect, the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau issues a resolute protest to the republic government and demands comprehensive measures to halt the escalation of terrorism and to prevent similar actions in the future.

Once again the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau appeals to all republic inhabitants to assist the law enforcement organs in identifying those guilty of these criminal actions.

Latvian CP Urges Vote To Preserve Union

PM2802125991 Riga SOVETSKAYA LATVIYA in Russian 15 Feb 91 p 1

[Latvian Communist Party Central Committee Press Center report: "In the Latvian Communist Party Central Committee"]

[Text] On 13 February the Latvian Communist Party [CP] Central Committee Bureau held a regular session.

The Latvian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau examined the question of the party organizations' tasks regarding the impending 17 March referendum on preserving the USSR, which is being conducted in accordance with a decision by the Fourth Congress of USSR People's Deputies.

It was noted that in the course of the forthcoming referendum every citizen will be offered the chance to exercise his constitutional right and express his opinion on the fundamental question of the fate of the Union and the Latvian people.

Guided by the decisions of the 25th Latvian Communist Party Congress, the Central Committee Bureau appealed to communists and the republic population to play an active part in the 17 March referendum and to vote in favor of preserving the USSR.

The bureau adopted a declaration in connection with the explosions in Riga city 12 February this year. The Latvian Communist Party Central Committee Bureau issued a resolute protest to the republic government and demanded comprehensive measures to halt the escalation of terrorism and prevent similar actions in the future. The declaration's text will be published in the press.

Riga Officers Warn of 'Anti-Army' Acts

LD2802114291 Moscow TASS in English 0958 GMT 28 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Oleg Moskovsky]

[Text] Moscow February 28 TASS—"Our patience is running out. We are prepared to stand up in defence of our constitutional and civil rights, in defence of our families," says a letter from officers and cadets of the Riga Higher Military Air Force Engineering School, quoted by Lieutenant-General Leonid Ivashov, chief of the administrative department of the USSR Defence Ministry, who was interviewed by TASS today.

"The school's personnel," Ivashov said, "addressed the letter to President Mikhail Gorbachev after the Latvian

Council of Ministers approved a resolution "on the procedure registering USSR servicemen and members of their families".

According to Ivashov, the Latvian Government's resolution not only ignores the federal legislation, but violates international law, too. According to this resolution, officers and petty officers stationed in Latvia will henceforth be allowed to live "practically only within the bounds of their military camps". Ivashov said this contradicted the principles of the universal human rights declaration, which "lays down the right of every individual to move freely and choose at will his place of residence within every state."

Ivashov mentioned also other enactments, previously passed in the Baltic republics, which are of a "flagrantly discriminatory character vis-a-vis servicemen". For instance, there is a decision to discontinue social and material security privileges to "all units of the Soviet Armed Forces deployed in the Latvian Republic".

Ivashov recalled that one of the principal features of democracy is strict observance and execution of state laws. "In the meantime," he claims, "in the period from 1989 to 1990 Lithuania has adopted 28, Latvia—12, and Estonia—16 acts, which contradict the USSR legislation and infringe upon the rights of servicemen. This is a separatist and discriminatory policy," he stated.

RSFSR

Supreme Soviet Joint Session Begins 27 Feb

LD2602172491 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0900 GMT 26 Feb 91

[Excerpts] There will be joint sittings of the chambers at the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Supreme Soviet session starting tomorrow through the end of the week. The Presidium firmly believes that these sessions should be used to the maximum to resolve specific issues, without deviating attention to political issues. It has decided to do this, and is why the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium yesterday considered the draft laws included in the agenda: on competition; on restricting monopolistic activities on commodity markets; on recall of deputies; on the procedure of the congress of the Supreme Soviet; on refugees; on medical insurance for RSFSR citizens; and a number of other draft laws. I also note that Smolensk Oblast soviet decision not to hold the USSR and RSFSR referendums on the oblast territory was also considered. This issue is to be considered at tomorrow's joint sitting of the chambers. [passage omitted]

The new draft constitution is now being sent to all committees and commissions, and they are to present their conclusion before 2 March.

Broadcasting, Militia Debated

LD2702232591 Moscow TASS in English 2159 GMT 27 Feb 91

[by TASS parliamentary correspondents]

[Text] Moscow February 27 TASS—The establishment of an all-Russian TV and radio company was the leading idea at the morning session of the Russian Federation parliament. It was reflected in a draft resolution "On the State of and Prospects for the Development of the Material and Technical Resources of Republican Media in the Russian Federation."

As a result of a keen discussion the Russian parliamentarians today resolved to instruct the republican government "to ensure the transfer of the second all-Union television channel to the authority of the Russian Federation."

The resolution emphasises the need to transfer part of the property of the all-Union state television and radio broadcasting company to Russia's possession and to use it free of charge.

Then deputies began to consider the first reading of the Russian Federation bill on militia. The sponsors of the bill believe that the existing model of militia does not ensure a reliable protection of the public order or an effective fight against crime.

The bill proclaims the founding of a criminal militia service and militia to maintain public order in Russia. Legality, humanism, respect for human rights, and openness have been defined as the main principles for militia activities.

At the end of the day deputies heard a Russian Federation bill on the medical insurance of citizens. It was decided to elaborate the bill further by using an alternative version as well.

The parliament considered a bill on a state taxation service of the Russian Federation. Deputies decided to elaborate it further and consider the second reading of the bill in March.

RSFSR Supreme Soviet Proceedings 28 Feb

LD2802234891

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian at 1955 GMT on 28 February broadcasts a 57-minute edition of the "At the RSFSR Supreme Soviet" program, including recorded highlights of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet session in the Kremlin on 28 February.

The program opens with an unidentified speaker listing out those officials who have been nominated to various RSFSR posts, promising a report on the concept of RSFSR security, reporting that a law will be prepared on RSFSR security, and urging support for Stepashin as security committee chairman.

Deputies vote Stepashin into the security committee chairman post.

At 2000 GMT, Kondrashev addresses deputies on the election of prosecutor general, pointing out that the fact that the post is vacant has "negative consequences." Kondrashev says Stepankov was proposed by USSR President Boris Yeltsin, with the majority of three committees supporting Stepankov's candidacy.

Stepankov takes the stand; stresses that he will not leave the party; and, in answering a question by Deputy Babayev, notes the difficulties of ensuring human rights and prioritizes the land reform and property issues.

After Deputy Ponomareva calls for unanimous support for Stepankov and Chairman Khasbulatov highlights Stepankov's qualities, deputies vote Stepankov into the prosecutor general's post.

Deputy Muravyev rises to talk about a bill on the procedure for recalling people's deputies, reviewing historical details of foreign practices on this issue. Muravyev notes that the most developed democracies, including the U.S. Congress, do not recall legislators and criticizes deputes for allowing their attention to wander. Muravyev then gives details of the bill.

At 2020 GMT, various deputies debate the bill, complaining that the criteria in the bill are too vague.

Khasbulatov interjects, saying questions of appropriateness are inappropriate and expressing his skepticism over the bill. Khasbulatov ends his comments by reminding that it is difficult to find time to visit constituencies.

Deputies then vote on and pass the bill before taking a break.

At 2033 GMT, following the break, a bill on fraud is debated and passed.

Stepankov rises to discuss a bill on releasing inmates at detoxification centers, opening debate on a bill on treatment of recalcitrant alcoholics. Stepankov criticizes old laws on this subject as abusive to human rights and provides statistics before announcing that a new law is being prepared on the question of rehabilitating alcoholics. Deputies then vote on and pass the bill.

Deputy Fedotov takes the floor on a bill stipulating the procedure for amending legal codes, pointing out that the bill would rectify the fact that press law is not being enforced for lack of sanctions. Fedotov notes proposed changes to the criminal code and highlights a paragraph that would curb interference with journalists. Fedotov then described various proposed amendments to the bill before deputies decide to defer the bill until further work has been completed.

Deputies reject a bill on RSFSR refugees as being inadequately prepared.

Khasbulatov offers a few closing words.

The program ends at 2052 GMT.

Stepankov Appointed Prosecutor General

LD2802171791 Moscow TASS in English 1533 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow February 28 TASS—The dissatisfaction of electors with the performance of their people's deputy is the only reason for his recalling, envisaged by authors of the draft law "On the order of recalling people's deputies of the Russian Federation." It was submitted for discussion to the Russian parliament in the first reading today.

According to the draft law, the problem of recalling a people's deputy can be brought up, if the idea is supported by ten per cent of a total number of electors of the given constituency. The draft law was thoroughly studied by two parliamentary committees, in fulfilment of a resolution of the First Russian Congress of People's Deputies, held in summer 1990.

At the same time, many legislators believe that the granting to the people of the right to recall people's deputies "will further split our society" and "will lead to even greater polarisation in the republic". Some of them even stated that the right to recall people's deputies is almost tantamount to stripping people's deputies of all their rights.

The draft law was supported by most members of one of the two chambers of the parliament. A final decision will be made by the Conciliatory Commission, made up of representatives of both chambers of the Russian parliament.

By the overwhelming majority of votes the Russian parliament appointed today Valentin Stepankov, 40, to the post of public prosecutor-general of the republic. Stepankov is a member of the Soviet Communist Party, people's deputy and a professional lawyer. He worked his way up from an investigating officer at a district public prosecutor's department to the first deputy prosecutor-general of the republic. A final approval of the prosecutor-general is a prerogative of the Russian Congress of People's Deputies.

Sergey Stepashin, a 39-year-old officer, was elected today chairman of one of the main parliamentary committees—the Committee for Security Issues.

The sessions of the Russian parliament are being chaired these days by first deputy chairman of the parliament Ruslan Khasbulatov. Boris Yeltsin, head of the Russian Supreme Soviet, is ill with grippe, Khasbulatov said. This is obviously the reason for the fact that Yeltsin's planned visit to Northern Caucasus has not taken place so far.

Moscow Conference Assails 'Liberals'

LD2702191791 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1500 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Text] The aim of a conference of public and political movements, entitled "For a great and unified Russia," which took place in Moscow today was the unification of patriotic forces in order to achieve national accord. Representatives from 80 parties, associations and unions; well-known scientists, cultural and religious figures from various regions of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic; Polozkov, first secretary of the Russian Communist Party Central Committee; Blokhin, chairman of the all-Union association of deputies of all levels and a USSR people's deputy; writers Prokhanov and Bondarev; and other speakers called for effors to be applied by people of different political parties and religious beliefs to prevent the collapse threatening Russia, which will lead to chaos and civil war.

A TASS correspondent notes that together with appeals for unity, sharp confrontational speeches were heard, and demands for the leaders of the state and Russia to be brought to trial were made at the conference.

The main final document was an appeal made by the participants of the conference to the peoples of Russia. It says, in particular: We have no faith in liberals, who have betrayed the main property of our history—a great country. Only a strong and patriotic power in action is capable of finding a way out of a tragedy for Russia.

Conflicting Views Aired

PM2802163391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Second Edition p 4

[A. Andreyev report: "Desire for Unity"]

[Text] A conference of RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] sociopolitical movements was held yesterday in the October Hall of the House of Unions—"The Unification of Patriotic Forces for the Achievement of Interethnic Concord and for a Great, Unified Russia."

Representatives of unions and associations, parties and alliances, and well-known scientists and religious figures from various parts of the RSFSR participated in the conference.

The majority of the speakers, including I. Polozkov, first secretary of the Russian Communist Party Central Committee; USSR People's Deputy Yu. Blokhin; writers A. Prokhanov and Yu. Bondarev; and others, called for civic peace and interethnic concord in the name of averting the threatening disintegration of Russia.

However, in addition to these speeches there were also others—in my view, harsh, excessively emotional, and sometimes even incorrect statements contradicting the wise words about the need for unity. Some participants demanded a trial of the leaders of the country and Russia and evaluated perestroyka as a direct road to capitalism.

Nevertheless, those assembled still adopted the text of an appeal to the peoples of Russia as a basis. It speaks, in particular, of denying trust to so-called democrats who have betrayed the most important asset in our history—a great country and a great multinational society.

Then resolutions on the all-Union and Russian referendums, the draft Russian Constitution, interethnic relations, and others were adopted as a basis.

The conference participants entrusted the organizational committee with formulating the structure of the general coordinating council of Russia's patriotic forces within a week.

17 Mar Poll Slated for Kuril Islands

LD2702201591 Moscow TASS in English 1602 GMT 27 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Yevgeniy Belovitskiy]

[Text] Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk February 27 TASS—The wave of various referendums, which originated in the Baltic republics, today hit the Soviet Union's eastern fringeland—the Kuril Islands. Neighbouring Japan lays claim to four of them—Kunashir, Iturup, Shikotan and Habomai.

There is growing concern among local inhabitants as President Gorbachev's visit to Tokyo approaches. They fear lest their lands, where they are now firmly established, become an exchange coin in big policy talks.

It is common knowledge that the Soviet president has qualified the poll in the baltic republics as a "juridically insolvent" action, which is merely of interest as a "sociological study".

Sensing the sentiments of local inhabitants, the Presidium of the Yuzhno-Kurilsk district council (Kunashir, Shikotan and Habomai are under its jurisdiction) has decided to hold a public opinion poll about the archipelago's status. It will be held on March 17, simultaneously with the nation-wide referendum on the Soviet Union's future. This initiative was backed by the Kuril district council, to which the island of Iturup is subordinated.

Almost ten polls were held on the Kuril Islands over the past three years. They dealt in this or that form with the question of the "northern territories". Their initiators included the Soviet trade union newspaper "TRUD", the Japanese TBS television company, the Soviet television, the newspaper "HOKKAIDO SHIMBUN", as well as local Soviet Communist Party organisations. However, they at best probed the views of only 10-15 percent of the Kuril population. This time, all the archipelago's adult population will take part in the planned poll.

The Sakhalin regional council notified President Mikhail Gorbachev and Chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet Boris Yeltsin about its view on the forthcoming state visit to Japan. Deputies believe that relations between the USSR and Japan should be improved not by satisfying territorial claims or making concessions, but on the basis of the region's joint economic and cultural development.

The future of the Kuril Islands cannot be decided without taking into account residents' opinion. Local parliamentarians believe it is impossible to alter the status of the Kuril islands without a referendum, furnishing separate positive answers from the Yuzhno-Kurilsk district, Sakhalin region, the Russian Federation and the USSR as a whole.

Spokesman Denies Yeltsin in Afghanistan

LD0103101391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0932 GMT 1 Mar 91

[By TASS legislative correspondent Lev Aksenov]

[Text] Moscow, 1 Mar (TASS)—Foreign mass media reports saying that the head of the Russian legislature is now paying a visit to Afghanistan were refuted today by Pavel Voshchanov, an expert on information issues attached to the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet.

Referring to Genrikh Grigoryev, Yeltsin's general practitioner, he told a TASS correspondent that Boris Yeltsin is at home at the moment because of his flu. The state of his health is "relatively satisfactory", he said, and "we hope that he will start working very soon".

PRAVDA Editor Says Trust in Yeltsin Waning

OW2802135291 Tokyo KYODO in English 1326 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] Tokyo, Feb. 28 KYODO—The chief editor of Soviet Communist Party organ PRAVDA said Thursday faith in the ability of Russian Federation leader Boris Yeltsin is declining and he may face a vote of no confidence at an upcoming federation meeting.

Ivan Frolov, a party Politburo Bureau member, cited Yeltsin's comment that Russia should arm itself for its dependence. Yeltsin later denied the comment and blamed those who heard the comment for misinterpretation, the editor said.

On Japan's claim of a group of four Soviet-held islands, Frolov criticized Yeltsin's remarks. Yeltsin once said in Japan that the isles might be returned gradually to Japan but later changed his comments, Frolov said.

These shifting comments by Yeltsin are causing doubts in his political ability, Frolov noted, adding many PRAVDA readers are writing letters to the paper with critical views of Yeltsin.

Frolov said Yeltsin's remarks include many negative views on perestroyka, and that has been understood by not only the union leadership but also those close to Yeltsin in the Russian Federation, who have begun to doubt his ability as federation chairman.

"His lack of consistency is completely opposite from Gorbachev as a substantial political leader," he said.

Frolov said the gigantic federation is set to hold a deputies' meeting in late March to discuss a possible no confidence vote.

Frolov said confrontation between President Mikhail Gorbachev and Yeltsin is increasing but it is Yeltsin who started it.

RSFSR Deputies View Extraordinary Congress

91UN0962A Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 23 Feb 91 First Edition p 1

[N. Garifullina report: "'Russia Can No Longer Live Like This'"]

[Text] **The eight minutes that the deputy chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Supreme Soviet, Svetlana Petrovna Goryacheva, asked for yesterday to present a political statement on behalf of six members of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium truly shook the Russian legislature. A fierce clash of opinions immediately developed about the statement. Two diametrically opposed viewpoints dominated: full approval, solidarity, and support for the position of the six and admiration for the civic courage of Svetlana Petrovna herself, and total rejection of this position and criticism leveled at those who signed the statement that sometimes even became direct insult and threat. Yes, to speak the truth in the Russian legislature it is essential to have more than a modicum of courage. And how are the people's deputies assessing this statement and the situation in the Supreme Soviet?**

Anatoliy Shevtsov, Smolensk Oblast

We should have expected this long ago because the Supreme Soviet has found itself at an impasse. For virtually six weeks not one single law needed by the people has been passed. The statement issued by Goryacheva was timely and justified: Russia can no longer live like this. There is no doubt that there will be an extraordinary congress, only the question of the date remains. The best time, of course, is 4 March. The main problems worrying Russia will be resolved at the congress. The anarchy cannot continue. We need a strong, firm, and responsible authority, then the situation can be put to rights. Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin and those close to him cannot do this. Moreover, we now see that there has been a split in the Presidium.

Ravkat Chebotarevskiy, Murmansk Oblast

The statement read by Svetlana Petrovna virtually said it all—everything we are talking about here in the lobbies

and at meetings with our constituents. The situation is so complicated that it is now impossible to tolerate any longer the disorganization and chaos that, unfortunately, is also occurring because of Boris Nikolayevich. If it goes on, things will be totally out of control.

There is an other aspect to this. Right from the start Boris Nikolayevich has set out on the path of confrontation. Now the masks have been cast aside and in his television statement he said what he had obviously been thinking and saying while trying, under various guises, to hide his intentions. And today I am convinced that no member of the Presidium apart from those very close to Boris Nikolayevich knew about it beforehand. But can he really appeal to the entire Russian people, essentially asking them to support him in his struggle against the Union center? And to go on saying that the demand to convene an extraordinary congress is connected with Yeltsin's statement is incorrect. I subscribed to this demand as long ago as 3 February, and since then to this very day the presidium has been deciding whether or not to place this issue on the agenda. In his statement, Shakhray said that we are approaching the week when in accordance with the rules we must meet the voters. But I am convinced that there is no thought of departing until we have decided the issue of the extraordinary congress and of the referendum on which some deputies have been firmly insisting.

Ivan Savchenko, Murmansk City

Today we can see clearly the system of relationships within the Supreme Soviet, a system that has precipitated the crisis in the Supreme Soviet and government. It has matured because the Presidium and the Supreme Soviet are failing to take into account the opinions voiced during the session. The attempt to adopt political decisions to suppress the opposition position has failed. And this has led to the crisis, and it, naturally, has produced the need to convene an extraordinary congress.

Tatyana Ivanova, Mordovia

I have just returned from my own electoral district in Mordovia. I met more than 200 people personally and there were meetings in two rayons, and now I can say with a fair degree of confidence what is worrying people today. They are saying that the Supreme Soviet is now somewhat divorced from life and is not dealing with the key problems with which people are living.

The position of the head of the Supreme Soviet is worrying people, and accordingly they are well aware that concern for the fate of the people should not only be heard in the speeches but also seen in the actions of the leader. So that people see that the program for an upsurge in the countryside adopted by the second congress is not being implemented.

A second question that worries people is the fate of the Union referendum. There are forces that are working against it. And it must be said that the ambiguous position of Boris Nikolayevich is confusing people's minds and they cannot understand how a person can speak on the issue by making ambiguous statements. I am deeply convinced that no one wants the collapse of the power, and everyone understands that we can move ahead only after concluding the Union treaty as quickly as possible, delineating powers, and coming to grips with the problems that are really urgent for people. Forces here in the Supreme Soviet are pursuing a destructive policy and working for collapse.

I support the call to convene an extraordinary congress immediately. Today's statement by the Supreme Soviet deputy chairman has been regarded as quite a courageous step. I think that assessments will be made at the congress, including of the leaders of the highest organ, and evaluations made of how closely their position matches their election platform and statements.

In the evening when I left the House of the Soviets on Krasnopresenskiy embankment I had to pass through a crowd of pickets. Strange women. I meet them here every time. Apparently their "work" is to declaim the words "Yeltsin! Yeltsin!" from time to time in hoarse voices. On command they ran from one exit to the other, guarding the egress of Svetlana Petrovna Goryacheva, falling upon her as they usually throw themselves on the communist deputies. Many of them held placards with imprecations directed against the Communists of Russia and Svetlana Petrovna and her colleagues. One torn placard read "Boris, you are right, right, right..." The thought occurred to me that this kind of "protection" and these kinds of "protectors" add nothing to the authority of the object of that protection...

Legislature Deputy Chairman on Rift With Yeltsin

91UN0965A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 26 Feb 91 pp 1-2

[Interview with S. Goryacheva, deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, by RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA special correspondent Viktor Ukolov; place and date not given: "There Is No Dictatorship Without Dictators: Why Deputy Chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet S. Goryacheva Spoke Against Her Chairman"]

[Text] **We have seen S. Goryacheva dozens of times on the television screen during broadcasts of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet or republic Congress of People's Deputies sessions. We did not single her out, though: She did not elbow her way to the microphones, and if she spoke, it was in a businesslike, proper manner. Now the name of Svetlana Petrovna is in the press and on the airwaves.... Let us think: Why all of a sudden? She presented the political statement of a number of Supreme Soviet Presidium members, which was critical of the chairman. Is that all? Well, do not take it too lightly—after all, she was criticizing the actions of Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin himself!**

The reaction was immediate. Some praise her to the skies, others are ready to feed her to the wolves. Oh, you, Mother Russia!

So here I am, in S. Goryacheva's office: a spacious room filled with light, and a sizable desk. And the title, of course, sounds impressive: deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet. Her soul is not at peace, though; this is not what she wanted...

[Ukolov] One should always start from the very beginning. Svetlana Petrovna, you are, so to say, a newcomer to Moscow. A little about yourself.

[Goryacheva] Yes, I am from faraway Primorskiy Kray, was born in Anuchinskiy Rayon, in a workers family. I was the oldest of my four brothers and sisters.

For some reason, since childhood I wanted to become a jurist. That is what I became after graduating from Vladivostok University. I worked at the procuracy, proceeded up the career ladder to a still rarely encountered post—inter-rayon prosecutor on environmental affairs. On my career resume is the ban on stream-driven timber on Primorskiy Kray rivers and the requirement that new industrial objects get a license to operate only if they have operational waste treatment facilities.

It is clear that any success in the area of ecology comes at the price of unbelievable efforts: Departmental diktat and the lack of well-defined legal mechanisms are the reasons for that. So, maybe the battle should be started from that end? From the creation of a solid law-based state. People that have enormous natural resources should not live in poverty.

Upon sober deliberation, I entered the contest for the deputy mandate. There were 10 of us candidates, and only one mandate; the voters entrusted it to me. Their trust is my enormous responsibility.

[Ukolov] Then, having arrived in Moscow which was bubbling with demonstrations and rallies, under whose banners did you place yourself?

[Goryacheva] The combativeness, or, more precisely, aggressiveness of many political forces does not evoke my sympathy, you know. Listen to the same "democrats." What kind of democrats are they? "Down with," "Bring to justice," "Prosecute!"—this is their entire rally lexicon.

Still, at first I found the ideas of the Democratic Russia bloc interesting. At the first congress I voted for the declaration on the sovereignty of Russia proposed by them. I was attracted by its clauses on the separation of powers and the principle of establishing boundaries between the powers of the Union and those of the republics. And, finally, the desire to work out a new Union treaty. However, I voted against Point 5—I do not recognize the supremacy of Russian laws over the laws of the country. This does not exist anywhere in the world. This is not accidental. The result of it today is the chaos, stress, and economic losses. It is anecdotal: The session of Moscow's Krasnopresnenskiy Rayon Soviet declared the supremacy of its laws and thereby claimed the building of our RSFSR Supreme Soviet as their property! But tomorrow this will not be a such laughable matter: The parade of sovereignties may lead to bloodshed.

Now the main thing. At the first congress we, the deputies, expressing the will of our voters, chose a most correct strategy: the revival of Russia, and the increasing of its political and economic might. We said that it should become an equal among equals, a historic center of attraction, for all of us, as in a tight-knit family, a natural mother.

This large goal permitted the unification of all political forces and movements. Unfortunately, the tactic chosen—one of ultimatums, confrontation with the center, and opposition between the blocs—has nullified all good intentions. I cannot understand: It seems that all of us unanimously want to make Russia a better place. Then let us listen to, and hear, each other.

As it is, though, there is a small group of "democrats" who are for some reason always right, and those who are against them are to blame for everything, as the "enemies of the people." That is, we are getting onto a dead end track again. Let us look the truth square in the eye: Even a year ago life in Russia was easier. Perhaps we should admit that it is not the fault of "enemies of the people" that we are tumbling downhill, but our own.

In the beginning of the year I visited my home city of Vladivostok. The people tell me: Svetlana Petrovna, it is not possible to live like that any longer. It is true. Store shelves are empty, and prices on the market have gone through the roof. When I returned to Moscow I told Boris Nikolayevich of this. Unfortunately, it did not result in a good discussion.

The relationship among the Supreme Soviet leadership is such that the chairman always acts on his own, without consulting with others or even notifying them. Understand me correctly, I am not talking from the position of an injured ego, but at the same time, to be a pawn in somebody's game that you do not even understand makes you feel ashamed in front of yourself and the people.

An example. On 13 February there was a conference in which all members of the Council of the Federation—chairmen of autonomous republics, krays, and oblasts—participated. We reached an agreement. The council supports the position of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers to raise prices. Clearly it is an unpopular measure, but it is unavoidable. Two days later we learn to our surprise that the same day B. Yeltsin sent a letter to V. Pavlov in which he refuses to sign the previously discussed agreement.

And his trip to the Baltics. On the eve of these events we at the Presidium adopted an appeal to the president in connection with events in Lithuania; we were all very concerned... Then I hear on television that Boris Nikolayevich is already holding meetings there and making statements. I will confess that it is an unenviable role to

be a hostage to somebody else's inconsistent policy. We have been elected to the Supreme Soviet to decide on the most important issues together.

[Ukolov] Did you, as an official person in Russia, participate in the preparation of B.N. Yeltsin's television speech on 19 February?

[Goryacheva] I want to state with full responsibility that neither I nor any of "The Six," as we are now called, were prompted by anybody to make a political statement on 21 February. Because all kinds of legends are being spread now. I have not met with M. Gorbachev (not even once in my life), or with I. Polozkov. All of us who signed this statement belong to different political currents. Therefore it cannot be said that it was specific social or political forces that spoke against Boris Nikolayevich. He should not look for "intrigues" in it. The more reason for him to seriously think about this. We have tried so many times to establish cooperation! Now we understand that we have exhausted all the means of trying to return him to a position of realism. His television statement was not discussed with anyone, we did not even suspect that it existed, and we fundamentally disagree with it.

[Ukolov] It is your right to distance yourselves from it, and you have exercised it. Moreover, you have got support: An extraordinary Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies is to be called, at which a report of the Supreme Soviet chairman on his activities is requested. So why are you upset? What bothers you?

[Goryacheva] I promised my voters to be guided in my work by common sense and conscience. Lately, my conscience had been bothering me, which is why I went to that podium. The reaction was, to put it mildly, diverse—right up to insults. And now I am receiving threats.

On the other hand, there is a stream of telegrams. The people support me, share my concerns, try to cheer me up. I will read you one: "If there is no man in your family who is capable of protecting your honor, the honor of a woman of Russia, from the unprecedented boorishness in front of the entire country, I would like to have the honor of carrying out my duty as a Russian officer." Signature.

Thank you, my knight. But my family, my husband, friends, and hundreds of compatriots stand by me. Some time ago I read a verse that stayed in my heart, and it is now very appropriate:

"Send us, Oh Lord, the patience
"In the time of dark and stormy days
"To withstand the heckling from the deceived crowd
"And the torture of our executioners.
"Give us the strength, Oh Lord the Righteous,
"To forgive the gibes of liars
"And to accept the heavy and bloody cross
"As gently as you have."

These verses were found after the execution of the Tsar's family, in Great Duchess Olga's book.

[Ukolov] Let us read the telegrams, although there are so many of them. For example. From Volgograd: "Thank you for the truth, support you, want Yeltsin's resignation. Astakhov family, no party affiliation." From Moscow: "Fully support your political statement, believe it timely and to the point. Marchenko, Demidov, Skvortsova—176 signatures in all." From Vladivostok, your home town: "Admire your courage and principled stand, share your concern for the fate of the Union and Russia. Your voters, Popov and Emelchuk families." Another one from Moscow: "Esteemed Svetlana Petrovna, we are with you. Non-party women Muscovites." From Bologoye in Tver Oblast: "May God be with you and all who signed the statement; we are tired of Yeltsin's attacks on Gorbachev, the Communist Party, and deputies elected by us. He has fooled us long enough. Hands off the president! A group of like minds."

Here it is mostly discontent with Boris Nikolayevich. Pass it over to his office. By the way, why did he go to Yaroslavl immediately after this knockout interview? Was there a reason for such haste?

[Goryacheva] As his deputy I am supposed to be informed. Alas, very few in the Supreme Soviet are privy to the affairs and plans of our chairman. There is no collectivism in his work, only authoritarianism and disdain for lawfully elected organs.

[Ukolov] As a voter, I regret that. One wishes, of course, that all of you worked together here, to get things moving.

[Goryacheva] Unfortunately, things are not being run smoothly. Quite often we see the materials an hour or two before the discussion. As a result, decisions are made that can be qualified as unlawful.

You know about additional Russian questions for the all-Union referendum. The first one—about the necessity of preserving the RSFSR as a single federative state within the renewed Union—was not formulated in a precise manner, while the Presidium members, let us call things by their proper names, were deceived: They were told that there were already the necessary number of deputy votes supporting it. There was no such support. When it came out, I felt very uncomfortable and ashamed. And I was not alone in that. We held a vote, and the question had to be canceled.

But then we immediately committed another unlawful act. Only the Supreme Soviet has the power to allocate additional money for the republic referendum, and this is 50 million rubles. We "decided on it" at the Presidium meeting. To be honest, is it a good time to throw away millions when people are concerned with how they will feed themselves? But Boris Nokolayevich has a different opinion.

[Ukolov] He seems to have set his sights on the position of supreme commander? Judging by the published draft of the RSFSR Constitution, the head of the republic gets this title and even the right to declare war. Against whom, I wonder? The Union, or disagreeing neighbors?

[Goryacheva] The Supreme Soviet has gained enough wisdom and sense to disband the working group that "delivered" this draft; a whole year has been wasted! It is not expedient to bring it out for the congress' consideration. We will have to start from scratch.

See how many false starts? The reason lies on the surface: We are not ready for pluralism; we advocate democracy but still cannot get rid of the Stalinism inside us. Nevzorov gave a correct name to the Lithuanian freedom fighters: "Fascist democrats."

Tell me, did anybody attack Sazhi Umalatova from Grozniy when at the Fourth Congress of People's Deputies she called for Gorbachev's resignation? Anybody can see that this is a one-way street.

I have an excerpt from Plato's "Republic." Word by word, it is about our legislature: "Democracy is undermined by an illness, the symptom of which I consider the appearance of a certain category of people, idle and wasteful. We compared them to drones. The most poisonous of the drones make speeches and act, while the rest take seats close to the podium, buzz, and do not let anybody else speak differently." Sound familiar? And the wise man goes on to warn: This is the road to tyranny.

[Ukolov] Svetlana Petrovna, does it not seem to you that Boris Nikolayevich today is not as independent as he used to be? He has not even dared to go to the television studio alone. I am not implying that he is a puppet on somebody's strings—those who promoted him, created his aura, wrote speeches for him... But now, when the tide for the "democrats" is ebbing and the interest in them is on the wane, perhaps they have decided to play their trump card?

[Goryacheva] It has occurred to me, too. Way back at the First Congress of People's Deputies one zealous "democrat" told me: "Right now we need Boris Nikolayevich as a banner. In two years, everything will be different, another man will come to power." We—People's Deputy Lydia Shapovalova, who was present at that conversation, and I—found Yeltsin during the intermission and asked him about it straight. He said that he was not that naive, and that those who make such plans will certainly end up wrong.

But time has passed, and whose hands are at the helm of Russia? Just recently, without coordination with the Supreme Soviet, on B. Yeltsin's personal decision, a Supreme Consultative Council was formed. This is a gross violation of personnel and financial discipline because such issues are not within the competence of the chairman. There are 20 people on the list; some of them have been placed in the apparatus. Their salaries are between 700 and 750 rubles a month.

And who are these people we are "feeding up?" Mostly, they are members of the Interregional deputy group, from the USSR Supreme Soviet. They have no support there, so now they formulate policy on our sick Russian organism.

Nobody is arguing that the chairman needs advisers. But it seems to me that they should not be recruited exclusively from the Interregional group; it would be much more productive to have a group of competent aides of varied views. The composition of the consultant group to the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet is evidence that he is following a specific political line.

[Ukolov] Now a few words in conclusion, Svetlana Petrovna.

[Goryacheva] When we people's deputies were entrusted with our mandates, we took the oath of loyalty to Russia, not to specific—even though quite popular then—political leaders. Now is the time to say for real: Who are we going to serve from now on? I have made my choice.

Deputy Rejects Anti-Yeltsin Accusations

LD2802204391 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 26 Feb 91

[Interview with Anatoliy Sergeyevich Baronenko, Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) people's deputy, by Radio Rossii correspondent Kuznetsova at the RSFSR Supreme Soviet in Moscow—live]

[Excerpts] [Kuznetsova] The Democratic Russia deputies just met on the central issue: the forthcoming referendum. The situation makes it very difficult to work. The Smolensk Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies decided to carry out necessary work on the Union referendum. As for the Russian referendum, they decided not to hold it. Next to me at the microphone is RSFSR People's Deputy Anatoliy Sergeyevich Baronenko, who attended the meeting of the Democratic Russia bloc.

Anatoliy Sergeyevich, deputies agreed today to carry out work to—with the help of the mass media, in particular—explain to the public the necessity of holding such a referendum. What do you think? Will simply crossing out the questions in Russia, as the Smolensk Oblast Soviet did, not be a return to the past?

[Baronenko] A return to the past generally is already under way. Unfortunately, this sort of return has taken place in party policy and the work of the USSR Supreme Soviet; but I would like to take this opportunity to say a few words today about the significance of the Russian referendum. After the Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's television interview, a furious attack upon him was launched by the mass information media under the

control of the Staraya Ploshchad [CPSU Central Committee's address] and by party committees in general. [passage omitted]

All sorts of accusations are being made against Yeltsin. One of the accusations is that Yelstin does not want to implement unpopular measures. What unpopular measures do they have in mind? Increasing prices, freeing prices? [passage omitted]

What the Union and the party—the leading circles of the party—actually dislike is the fact that Yeltsin, in the post of Supreme Soviet chairman, is fighting courageously for the declaration of Russia's sovereignty to become reality. His entire activity is directed at the effective attainment of Russia's sovereignty. Yeltsin has practically no real power. The Union is constantly sabotaging the Russia's sovereignty; and if there is anything at all that Yeltsin can put up against the Union, it is only his personal authority among people. I think that is why the interview he gave was well timed. It was necessary for him to dissociate himself from the unpopular policy of the Union Government, which planned to stabilize the economy exclusively by robbing the working people. That is why Yeltsin had no other option.

To conclude, I call on all voters to come to polling stations on referendum day and say yes to the institution of presidential power in Russia. [passage omitted]

If the nationwide referendum approves the creation of the institution of presidential power in Russia, then Yeltsin can stand for president of Russia, and he will have sufficient will and power to defend the sovereignty of Russia. Enough of Russia being the milch cow to stuff up the holes in the Union budget! [sentence as heard] [passage omitted]

Commentary Views Attacks on Yeltsin, Democrats

LD2702233891 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 26 Feb 91

[Nikolay Agayants commentary: "What next?"]

[Text] All of us, Russians, are now experiencing an extremely difficult and dramatic moment. Just look at what is happening. The center, embodied by the Pavlov cabinet and other power structures, is overtly and cynically blocking laws adopted by the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Supreme Soviet, alleging that they run counter to the USSR constitution. The center is preventing the Russian Government from tackling problems in the interests of (?USSR and RSFSR) citizens and is refusing to finance the measures that have been drawn up to stabilize the economic situation in the republic and the compensatory efforts for meeting mounting price rises. On the other hand, the proceedings of the Russian legislature have effectively been paralyzed by attacks from Polozkov supporters against Yeltsin, Silayev, and all proponents of democratic views, those who call for the rigorous pursuit of a policy of genuine and in-depth economic and political reforms and renunciation of the legacy of our totalitarian past.

The events of recent days have confirmed once again that a fierce and well coordinated offensive has now been mounted to topple the Silayev government, to fundamentally alter the membership of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, and—as far as possible—to remove the inconvenient figure of its chairman.

What things are not being done to this end? Anonymous letters, like those distributed by Marshal Akhromeyev at the session of the USSR Supreme Soviet, overt pressure and, if you like, common (?treachery) are being brought into play. The end justifies the means, and the means employed by the opponents of Yeltsin and the new Russia are not the most proper ones. I don't have to cite the well-organized letters and telegrams in PRAVDA, SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, RABOCHAYA GAZETA, and KRASNAYA ZVEZDA.

This propaganda campaign holds no water. Let us take just one very indicative fact, since, as Lenin taught, the truth is specific. The Central Control Commission of the RSFSR Communist Party examined the case of communist Khabibullin, the former first secretary of the Bashkir oblast committee, the other day. He had taken a lot of liberties in this job: he committed an indiscretion in tackling of a housing matter, and used his official capacity for personal ends. The members of the commission conferred, and ruled that such behavior does not become a communist, let alone a leader. Khabibullin's actions damaged the party's prestige. Do you think the erring communist was carpeted? Nothing of the sort! As was declared by Stolyarov, chairman of the Russian Central Control Commission: We were not motivated by emotions alone; we took into account Comrade Khabibullin's recent energetic work in the Supreme Soviet.

So there you are! Of course, such unprincipled, self-serving but stalwart fighters for the people's happiness are today very much needed by those who have emerged from the trenches in order to attack the people for whom political struggle and personal ambitions have gone to their heads, as the general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee referred to Yeltsin and other so-called democrats in his speech in Minsk today. The challenge thrown down to the USSR president by the Russian leader undoubtedly signifies that a very serious choice and very serious decisions need to be made by the head of state. What next? Where are we to go? I think the next few days will provide a reply to these difficult questions.

RSFSR Defense Committee Chairman Profiled

PM2702145391 Moscow NEW TIMES in English No 7, 19-25 Feb 91 p 45

[Unattributed profile: "A General Without Army"]

[Text] Russia's MP, Colonel General Konstantin Kobets has been appointed Chairman of the State Committee of the Russian Federation for Defence and Security.

At 51, Konstantin Kobets, Dr of Military Sciences, deputy chief of staff of the Soviet Armed Forces, is one of the youngest among his country's highest military leaders. His subordinates say that he can stand his ground irrespective of his opponent's rank, is approachable and democratic in his views, a quality rarely encountered in military men.

Konstantin Kobets was born into the family of a steelworker, graduated from a military communications school, a Military Academy and the Academy of the General Staff. He served in various parts of the Soviet Union, took part in clearing up after the Chernobyl catastrophe and repaired the communication system in Armenia after the earthquake there.

It took a long time to choose the candidate to the post of Chairman of Russia's committee. It is hard to be a general without an army. And Russia is not going to have an army of its own. Colonel General Kobets believes that "there's no need to set up Russia's army as a means of defence of its sovereignty and the state, or of the continuation of its policy." In the political field, Union Armed Forces must guarantee the sovereignty and security of each republic, as well as the role of the USSR as a great power and a major factor in international political stability."

So it looks like the new Chairman of the Committee for the Defence of Russia will have to deal solely with questions of mobilization, civil defence and patriotic education. And, perhaps, from time to time to remind the country's leadership that it promised not to use the army to settle internal and inter-ethnic conflicts.

Russian PEN Center Defends Press Freedom

91UN0915C Moscow LITERATURNAYA GAZETA in Russian No 6, 13 Feb 91 p 3

[Letter: "The Right To Truth"]

[Text] The Russian Soviet PEN Center notes with concern that an offensive against the freedom of speech and freedom of press has begun in our country. There are attempts to tighten censorship. Tendentious coverage and concealment of facts are openly encouraged; unfortunately, some mass media organs take part in this, too.

The Law on the Press is one of the few tangible results of perestroyka. It equally protects the interests of society and the right of each citizen to receive truthful information. No progress is possible without the scrupulous observance of this law. The suppression of freedom and democracy always starts with strangling the newspapers and magazines, and radio and television.

People's deputies of the USSR and Russia, and of all sovereign republics, do not allow society, in your name and with your blessings, to be thrown back and lose hope for renewal!

[Signed] A. Rybakov, A. Adamovich, V. Aksyenov, Ch. Amiredzhibi, A. Arkanov, V. Astafyev, B. Akhmadulina, A. Bitov, T. Bek, Z. Boguslavskaya, R. Borodulin, Yu. Burtin, V. Bykov, A. Vaksberg, L. Vaneyeva, S. Vasilenko, I. Vinogradov, A. Voznesenskiy, R. Gamzatov, D. Granin, Yu. Davydov, I. Drutse, V. Dudintsev, Ye. Yevtushenko, V. Yerofeyev, M. Zhvanetskiy, I. Zolotusskiy, L. Zorin, Al. Ivanov, N. Ivanova, F. Iskander, A. Ivanchenko, S. Kaledin, I. Kashafutdinov, V. Kornilov, V. Korotich, A. Kurchatkin, V. Lakshin, S. Lipkin, I. Lisnyanskaya, D. Likhachev, V. Makanin, G. Matevosyan, B. Mozhayev, Yu. Morits, V. Narbikova, V. Ognev, Yu. Oklyanskiy, B. Okudzhava, Ye. Popov, A. Pristavkin, T. Pulatov, V. Pyetsukh, Ye. Rzhevskaya, M. Roshchin, Yu. Rytkheu, Yu. Ryashentsev, Ye. Sidorov, Vl. Sokolov, A. Strelyaniy, O. Suleimenov, Al. Tkachenko, G. Fedorov, Yu. Chernichenko, L. Chukovskaya, S. Chuprinin, O. Chukhontsev, M. Shatrov, N. Shmelev, Yu. Edlis.

Report on Goskomstat Consumer Data

914D0153A Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Feb 91 Union Edition p 3

[Unattributed report: "The Market in Russia: Instability Is Growing"]

[Text] According to figures from the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] State Committee for Statistics [Goskomstat], the consumer market in Russia has been destabilized. In their conclusions, the experts say, in particular, the following: "The appearance of inflation processes in the republic is intensifying. The consumer market has been destabilized. The sale of virtually all goods is taking place under conditions of acute shortages, restrictions on free trade, large-scale speculation and speculative demand, and the spread of various kinds of rumors... The forms in which inflation is being seen are not isolated but are superimposed one on the other, giving rise to an additional effect and intensifying the scale of the wave of inflation, whose consequences are extremely adverse for all spheres of social life." According to the Goskomstat figures, the scale of inflation processes during the first nine months of 1990 was 11.8 percent. The average annual growth rate for inflation processes during the 11th Five-Year Plan was 4.6 percent, and during the first four years of the present five-year plan it has been 8.2 percent. An investigation of black market prices conducted in September 1990 in 71 oblast (kray and republic) centers showed that on average they are two or three times above state retail prices. During the period January through October 1990, the growth in unsatisfied demand was 16.6 billion rubles [R] (it was R12.5 billion in 1989). The

volume of goods and services sold to the public was R222.1 billion for the first nine months of 1990, POSTFAKTUM reports.

Western Republics

Further Reportage on Gorbachev Visit to Minsk

PRAVDA Carries Speech to Workers

PM2802154191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 28 Feb 91 Second Edition pp 1, 2

[Unattributed report on "Speech by M.S. Gorbachev at the 26 February Meeting in the 'Minskiy Traktornyy Zavod Imeni V.I. Lenina' Association": "We Will Neither Turn Back, Nor Halt"]

[Text] Esteemed Comrades, I would like to start by telling you my itinerary in Belorussia. I would like first to communicate with the working people of Minsk, that is what has brought me here to you, to the tractor plant. I also hope to be able to meet this evening with representatives of the scientific and creative intelligentsia and listen to them, and perhaps also say something to them. I intend to spend the next two days in an area which has been left in the most dire straits as a result of the Chernobyl accident. I am thinking of Gomel and Mogilev Oblasts, which it is necessary to visit without fail to listen to people and discuss everything with them.

Please allow me now to greet you and, through you, esteemed tractor builders, the entire people of Belorussia who, during these years, at a very difficult stage in the development of our country's history, have showed their Belorussian mettle and their commitment to the idea of renewal and perestroyka. The Belorussians do this, as always, by weighing each step in a thorough and well-considered way. A lofty sense of responsibility is evident here, although you do, as I can see, have many anxieties.

You are, of course, aware that your tractors are perhaps the best in the country. My thanks for that, and for the fact that you plan to manufacture new ones. There is now an enormous need for them, especially in view of the great reform in the countryside.

I have been looking through questions sent to me and comparing them with what was said in the shops, and I feel that I must, albeit briefly, talk about the situation in the country. It is difficult, there is instability in society—both political and social—and economic ties have been ruptured. There is a growing threat to our whole economy, and if a breakdown does occur here, it will affect the implementation of the program of perestroyka and the position and lives of people whose patience is indeed stretched to the limit. The main issue therefore is to restore economic ties and impart to them a character which will enable every labor collective to develop and show its ability to do its job effectively.

There are also processes under way in interethnic relations which, if they are not stopped, pose no less a threat than destabilization in the economy. Incidentally, all this is closely linked.

People now ask whether we have not gone astray, whether we should not return to 1985, and perhaps even to 1983? I do not name those years at random. With an utter sense of conviction and mindful of my responsibility to you and all our people, I have to say that it would be the greatest mistake to turn back and discard all that we have done during these years. It is only at first glance that it may appear that everything was normal then. Already in the late seventies and early eighties, it was clear that the country could not go on being run that way. The increase in labor productivity fell to virtually half, and then to zero. Compared with developed countries, we used 50-100 percent more electricity, fuel, metal, and cement per unit of national income. While resources were inexhaustible, favorable conditions prevailed in the oil market, and we had inexhaustible labor resources, we got by. But then manpower began to run out and, as far as natural resources were concerned, we had to go to uninhabited regions, involving enormous outlay. Our trouble-free life came to an end, so to speak.

The growth in oil prices taught us little. People in the West quickly grasped what we should have realized and done back in the early seventies. They carried out enormous work to alter the whole structure of their production. Although it was also said here at the time that we had to seriously grapple with scientific and technical progress and a special plenum was prepared, it did not take place.

I will list other causes. Our economy was overloaded with heavy industry sectors, with too few enterprises producing consumer goods. It was the world's most militarized economy with the largest defense spending. If you also bear in mind what happened in the political process—no one could say that something needed to be done at an enterprise or in a region or republic, even if it was true. No one was interested in the opinion of the working class, the peasantry, or the intelligentsia. We must not forget that. We are not zombies, are we?

When people say today that Gorbachev is concentrating power, that is nonsense. There has never been, nor will there be, greater power or potential in a single state than that which the general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee possessed at that time. It was simply essential to change the state of affairs. We wanted to drastically increase labor productivity. Hence the task of acceleration. We invested 10 billion in our country's machine building to bring it up to standard, but soon saw that it was not making proper progress and was being stymied by the edict structures and by rigid planning and quotas. It was necessary to launch economic reform and introduce incentives. We also embarked on political reform, on reforming the Union. But we failed to ensure that these measures were synchronized and coordinated, and were unable to harness all this into a system. The

upshot was that control over the correlation between labor productivity and pay disappeared and not only did outlay on capital construction not fall, it increased. The amount of unfinished construction work showed no decline. A host of mistakes were made and none of those who headed the country or a republic during those years are declining responsibility for that.

What is necessary now? Since we have opted for the market, progress should be quicker. Since we have set about reforming the Union, the new Union treaty should be concluded and powers redistributed sooner. Since we have embarked upon the path of democratization, we should strictly seek to ensure that everything is regulated within, and on the basis of, the law. These processes are painful, but if we do not retain our economic ties and restore the situation in the consumer market to normal in the next few months, we will have to take the harshest measures. In this regard it was resolved that the 4 March sitting of the Cabinet of Ministers use the results of the first two months as the basis for a review of how the economic agreement signed by all republics on economic ties, taxes, food, and other spheres is being carried out. We are inviting the chairmen of republic councils of ministers and deputy chairmen in charge of supplies and agrarian affairs.

As far as reforming the Union is concerned, I think that we are on the right path. The republics should really feel that they are in charge within the bounds of their own sovereignty and new powers. The center should retain only that which all republics need: defense, the power industry, transport, communication, and so forth. The republics must agree that breaches of these ties could completely disorganize the economy.

The authorized representatives of the republics are now completing near Moscow their work on the draft Union treaty on the basis of comments and proposals made at the Federation Council. A delegation from Belorussia is taking part in this work. I think that the first version of the draft created by the republics themselves in consultation with experts—lawyers, sociologists, and so forth—will be prepared soon. This will make it possible for us to make the correct redistribution of powers and stop the "war" being waged between the republics and the center, which is not only disorganizing economic life but social life too, and is introducing confontation and causing great alarm.

What does the idea now being conceived by the representatives of the republics amount to? It is the idea of a renewed federation. Not everyone has agreed with this. But I think that what the republics directly participating in this process submit will make it possible for us to make resolute progress toward the renewal of the Union. We will not waste time.

I am convinced that we cannot split up, bearing in mind the way our country has developed over the centuries and in recent decades from the standpoint of the location of productive forces, cultural ties, and demography. Splitting up will escalate antagonism, which will lead to major confrontations. Therefore we must take the path of redistributing powers and ensuring real sovereignty within a renewed Union. That goal is attainable. I am sure that people will opt precisely for that in the 17 March referendum. There are people who wish to cast doubt on the referendum and even cast—against the will of the people—doubt on the wording of the referendum, alleging that it is complex and incomprehensible and should be simplified. Such voices are also raised in your legislature. But what is incomprehensible there? What we are talking about is the USSR, a renewed federation of sovereign republic states, and the fact that all the peoples and all citizens, no matter what their nationality or where they live, be guaranteed equal rights and opportunities by the Constitution and the Union Treaty.

I think that everything is clear here. The discussion in the USSR Supreme Soviet on this score was trenchant. I, incidentally, did not take part in it to avoid any suspicion of pressure whatsoever. The deputies themselves, who represent the country, chose the wording. This referendum is crucial. It gives us the chance to advance boldly toward a Union in which there are strong republics and a strong center.

A few words about the situation in the market and in finances. We need to get away from shortages and put a stop to frenzied activity in the market. According to certain estimates, families have hoarded goods worth almost 100 billion rubles [R]. I was recently told that one Moscow family had laid in two sacks of flour heedless of the fact that it might go bad pretty quickly. That is not an infrequent occurrence. No market can cope with that. The switch to new prices, the new price formation system, and the simultaneous increase in the output of goods will help stop this, but it will not happen immediately.

Comrades, I was asked at the plant what measures will be taken to combat the "black" market. I think that administrative and criminal measures must be applied along with economic ones. Let certain circles criticize the president for the harshness of his decrees and for measures which are allegedly not in keeping with reform. Yes, the decrees adopted in recent months are perhaps not in keeping with a normal market, but they do precisely correspond to the transitional period to the market, when it is necessary to stabilize the situation in the country. I am sure that the majority of you are in favor of such harshness and such control—that was heard in all my conversations at the plant.

Now for price policy. Since all enterprises are entering the market they must sell their output and earn revenue, and the question facing everyone is: What should the price be? Coal does not go into the conventional consumer market, it goes mainly to enterprises, oil is consumed primarily in production, the power industry, and so forth. Thus I, the coalminer, and the oilman need the kind of wholesale price which would make it possible to earn a living. Until now, however, we in this country

have used oil at R30 a tonne but sold it in the external market for $120. So the oilworker makes a comparison here. The miner and the metal worker, too. But without energy, coal, or metal the national economy cannot exist.

It was necessary to embark on new wholesale prices. Incidentally, they did not resolve the problems of those sectors, it was necessary to create stabilization funds. All enterprises were given the opportunity to agree on contract wholesale prices but their level was fixed to prevent "monopolists" from fleecing the consumers. Thus if the price exceeds normal profitability all the rest goes into the budget. Therefore there is no point in forcing these prices up further.

Purchase prices. Today we sell collective and state farm agricultural output worth R100 billion. But to support those farms we subsidize purchase prices to the tune of R137 billion. You cannot enter the market with distortions like that, a price reform is needed. The task is certainly not one of resolving state problems at the working people's expense. The approach will be this: Fixed prices are being set for food and the revenue earned will be used to compensate the population. With the exception of luxury food items and everything that was discussed in the fall—these goods remain at free prices. The basic industrial goods—clothing, footwear, children's goods, and so forth—will have fixed prices and all the revenue will also be returned to the consumer. Thus the bulk of the resources derived from increasing prices will be used for compensation and it will begin before the raising of prices.

You ask: When? This morning the preparation of an agreement on forming the principles of price policy was completed in the area of retail prices. It was elaborated at the Federation Council after two or three sittings, it was discussed quite recently and further remarks were made. Everything was taken into account, the only thing left is for the republican leaders to sign. They were asked to do that in the next three or four days and after that we will set deadlines. Since comrades are saying to me that contract prices are being introduced and are rising without anyone resolving the question of wages, it is clear that there must be no delay.

As for the normalization of prices, it must be realized that we do not want to let everything slide—let the market decide, people say. Nothing will come of that, Comrades. For the time being this process must be regulated. The entire mechanism will be achieved to a considerable extent by the republics and each of them will be able to take its own specifics into account.

We will move toward the market and to denationalization—the relevant draft law is being examined right now at the Supreme Soviet. It must be implemented in its own way, not by imitation. It is necessary to study the experience of running economies which have culivated the market for a long time but also to see our country and our realities and in that framework resolve questions of the transition to the market economy.

If anyone thinks that the market will resolve everything, that is a mistake. There are 15-20 prosperous states with a market economy but there are more than 100 such states in all, and by no means all of them are prosperous.

The market needs a major structural policy in order for us to gear our economy to man through conversion and the creation of new goods production capacities. The prime need is for time and resources and, of course, a scientific and technical policy, scientific and technical progress. Without them there will be no resource saving, labor productivity growth, or high quality output. We will make progress in all these areas.

I am hoping for understanding and support. This applies not just to you. From this platform in this tractor builders' hall I address all the working people of the country.

Then M.S. Gorbachev answered questions from factory workers.

People ask: How do I feel about holding two posts—president and general secretary? And a second question: Do you consider reregistration and the exchange of CPSU party cards to be relevant?

I am sure that at the present very complex, transitional stage in the life of the country and the party itself, it is necessary at the moment to combine these posts. The party wants that. The president needs the party's political support. Criticism of it does not change the role which it played and still plays. The claims that the party has outlived its usefulness and is to blame for everything are unacceptable. No. The party comprises millions of people representing all strata of our society, and such an accusation is provocative. It has political aims which do not meet the interests of the common cause.

But as for the question: How do I feel?, I can say this: There is no lack of work to do. In any event, while my strength lasts I shall do my utmost not to disappoint the workers, and that includes Communists.

As for the theme of reregistration and the exchange of party cards, I think that the most important thing now is to do the work that we have begun on the basis of congress decisions and the Program Statement. The party and Communists, having put the painful experiences behind them, have begun to work more actively. Both in soviets at all levels and in labor collectives, people are raising their voices in defense of the policy of perestroyka and taking active part in discussions, in the elaboration and pursuit of policy, and this will help the new organs of power, those who have really shouldered the burden of responsibility for implementing the course of renewal.

Then there is this question: Lenin was considerate toward his comrades in arms—Kamenev, Zinovyev, Trotskiy, and others. Despite their mistakes, Vladimir Ilich did not expel them but corrected them. During the

years of perestroyka you have lost Yeltsin, Yakovlev, Shevardnadze, Bakatin, and finally Ryzhkov. How do you regard this yourself?

Well, this is a really involved question. First, A.N. Yakovlev was a member of the Presidential Council and remains my adviser. I am considering submitting V.V. Bakatin's candidacy to the Security Council. It was in 1982 that N.I. Ryzhkov and I set out on the long road in search of answers to the questions which life set society. We were and will remain friends to the end. He was incapacitated by illness. Nikolay Ivanovich is already at home now, we talked together recently, he is already feeling quite well now and it is his sovereign right, so to speak, to decide his own future.

I have known E.A. Shevardnadze since our Komsomol days. He was my choice as foreign minister. It surprised many people then, not only in the Union but also and particularly in the world at large. But as it turned out, he was a man who really did make a tremendous contribution to the implementation of the policy of perestroyka in the international sphere. The decision was his own. I personally disagreed with that decision but I see no way of forcing someone to occupy such a very high post. It was not the occasion. [Ne tot sluchay] In a recent speech at the Foreign Ministry I said: I hope that in the new situation in which he finds himself, Comrade Shevardnadze will make a weighty contribution to the further struggle to implement the line of perestroyka.

Finally, B.N. Yeltsin. I think that it would be a great oversimplification to reduce everything to a matter of personal relations between Gorbachev and Yeltsin. I am sure that you have already studied Gorbachev a little in those years and you know that I have a sufficient reserve of good will, openness, and breadth of views to listen to everyone's opinion. Furthermore, the position of president obliges you to deal not only with your party, which nominated you and supports you, but also with other political movements and with all strata of our society. Communists must understand that. Sometimes, however, it is claimed about me that, in dealing with representatives of other political and social movements, I seem to betray Communists and the party. That, I think, is not a serious charge. Furthermore, everyone in the party should abandon this sectarian view once and for all. After all, the CPSU has already stated that it renounces its monopoly of power and is ready to cooperate at all levels with all forces interested in the country's prosperity. I share that viewpoint and will act accordingly.

Thus, it is not a question of personal likes or dislikes here. It is a question of two different political lines and program goals. This is where the divergence lies. Whereas before they were of a tactical nature, as Comrade Yeltsin has said on numerous occasions, he has now taken the platform to put proposals which, I think, diverge from the aims of perestroyka—at least from the aims that we all worked for together. In this connection everything has become considerably more complex. At my meeting with representatives of science and the intelligentsia today, I shall try to cover this theme in broader terms. I think that this should be done because Communists and the country's working people expected to know my position.

There are many questions about the tax system. What we are doing now is to a large extent due to extreme circumstances. All the republics have signed an economic agreement for 1991. If you corner me on this one now, so to speak, I have to say that we cannot back down from the taxation and financial measures planned. They are needed to get to grips with the deficit and to normalize the financial situation. Therefore we shall do what we have decided to do, otherwise we will go backwards again. We must endure this period and take the situation in hand more quickly. That is the point of the emergency measures designed to last one year. The majority of them will be unpopular.

People write to me: So-called democratic forces have officially called for the overthrow of the existing system, something which is banned by the present USSR Constitution. Nevertheless, they are meeting no resistance or opposition. Perhaps this situation suits the country's present leadership?

My answer is this: The struggle for power by political means in the framework of the Constitution and of democratic processes through elections is a normal event. But this time what we see is a struggle against constitutional structures. We must say resolutely when we see unconstitutional actions: No, this shall not be. The people expect life to improve, such burdens have been placed on them, and in this situation inciting people to confrontation is tantamount to contempt for both human life and the people's interests. People who in this situation become obsessed with confrontation and their own ambitions are like those who do their own thing regardless of what is happening around them. I see this and I am obliged to use all the potential of the president to prevent this slide toward a confrontation that would be disastrous for everyone (applause).

There are questions on foreign policy: "Do you not think that our foreign policy activity has failed, seeing that the world is once more being ruled by the stronger, and that the country's defense capability is declining against this background? Why is Iraq perceived as aggressor by the USSR while Israel, which has not fulfilled the UN resolutions on the Near East, is not? How can the United States, which trampled all over Grenada and Panama, take the liberty of holding forth on human rights and lecturing others, including us, on what should be done and how? Where is the logic and consistency of our stance?"

I am convinced, Comrades, that the foreign policy we have pursued in the last few years is in line with our fundamental interests. The past policy of admitting the inevitability of confrontation and military clash was

most dangerous—people in many countries started realizing this. We came up to a point where the world was about to literally blow up. We exhausted our economy. The United States, whose gross product is 2.5 times greater than ours, found it tough to keep up this arms race. What sort of foreign policy was that, proceeding from the premise that we would have to fight almost the entire world and that all countries, with just a few exceptions, were our enemies?

I was and still am convinced that we need normal external conditions so as to get down to our own affairs and, as you can see, we have plenty of them. We need to get out of the arms race but, of course, without undermining defense capability and by reducing the level of confrontation on an equal basis. We are achieving this along the path of signing new treaties on medium-range missiles, conventional arms, and a 50-percent reduction of strategic nuclear weapons... We lost out because we did not engage in normal cooperation with the entire developed world and did not take advantage of the achievements by the other section of civilization. In exactly the same way, it is also losing a great deal. It is necessary to develop normal relations with the peoples of all countries, because no one wants to be incinerated in a nuclear war. This is why our policy is correct in the main.

Has our country's defense capability diminished? No. I must say that we are dealing with the Americans on an equal footing. Unless relations between our countries are normalized, nothing good would have occurred or will occur on a large scale in the world. Therefore, this is a major gain. We are still at the beginning of the road, our relations are still fragile, they are being tested now, and they must be strengthened by both sides—otherwise everything might be destroyed. It is therefore necessary to be very responsible and not make any rash judgments on foreign policy, including the politics of relations between the Soviet Union and the United States.

We will act in a realistic fashion in our approaches toward European security, the reduction of confrontation, and the arms race. We need this and all the peoples need it. Now, about Iraq. We adopted a principled line of resolving and ending conflicts by political means. We adopted this in Afghanistan, Angola, and Namibia, we are very close to a solution to the Cambodia conflict, and finally we are trying to do the same regarding the most protracted and complex conflict—the one in the Near East.

The point at issue is whether we are altogether capable of resolving world affairs by political means or whether force, and therefore the cult of force, will continue to dominate international relations. This is why, when a militarily strong country takes on a tiny one, occupies it, and acts as an aggressor, our position must be principled. We took such a position and rigorously adhere to it.

But we also held and continue to hold that questions should be resolved by political means. This is why, in these anxious days, we established contacts with Iraq and are still maintaining them. President Husayn of Iraq sent a telegram to the Soviet Union tonight, stating that he is withdrawing his troops from Kuwait. We urgently notified the United States of this and instructed Vorontsov, our representative on the Security Council, to raise the question of Husayn's statement at the Security Council sitting. We are thus acting and pursuing a principled line.

A question: "Why is it that the Western way of life is lauded left, right, and center; where is the objective information to prove this? If everything is so fine there, maybe we should also take their path?"

I assume that we must be open to the world and it will open up for us, it will cooperate with us. We must take on everything that we find acceptable, exchange everything that is positive, develop trade and economic relations and contacts in the spheres of culture, tourism, sport, and human contacts. After all, every society has its problems, including America itself, and we have repeatedly discussed this with the U.S. President. Recession, financial difficulties, and debts are building up over there, as well. But these are problems on a different level.

Furthermore, there is no need for us to copy anything. We have already done so, and have even forced others to do so. We know what the outcome was. It is necessary to seek mutually advantageous paths of cooperation; to utilize everything positive that other peoples have to offer while remaining within the framework of the socialist choice.

There is one observation I would like to make in this context. The document on the unification of the two Germanys was being initialed in Moscow. Taking part were four ministers from the victorious countries in World War II and two representatives from the FRG and the GDR. During the official dinner I was asked: Tell us, what is happening now in the Soviet Union, what are you going to do, where are you going? My reply was approximately the same I gave you now. A debate ensued. U.S. Secretary of State Baker took one stance, French Foreign Minister Mr. Dumas put forth another, their colleague from the FRG presented a third point of view, Britain's foreign minister shared his view of the problem. To put it briefly, each country has its own choice, its own specific features, its own traditions, and its own approaches toward social questions and forms of ownership.

So, in implementing the choice we have made in the economy, the reformation of the Union, and the development of the political system, we must follow this path, gather experience, and introduce any amendments dictated by life based on commitment to democracy, social justice, and human rights and freedoms, enriching and augmenting our traditions with everything valuable that we could borrow from other countries and peoples. But with dire consideration for our realities without fail.

Of course, people cannot be driven to the good life, let alone driven to it by force. It is necessary to use laws, politics, and practical activity to create prerequisites for encouraging the new forms of life rather than copying and building artificial "models."

Comrade Pavlovich wants to know: Will there be a monetary reform? There will not be any.

Another question: When will an end be put to disorder in the country? This is the paramount task. No plans, not even the most convincing ones, will be successfully implemented if society lives in conditions of instability and chaos. Comrade Denisenko asks: What plans are there for solving the question of young people's employment? Has this question been covered by the law on youth? First, a whole package of proposals, including a law on employment, is under preparation on this account. The most important point is a system for training and retraining, primarily for young people. This must became state policy, and the relevant acts are being prepared. This is a major social issue and we must resolve it jointly with those who are dealing with social protection, compensations, and indexation.

M.S. Gorbachev conveyed to the tractor plant workers his thanks for the meeting and the demonstration of warm feeling.

TV on Talks With Workers

LD2802132591 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 26 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent S. Medvedev on conversations between President Mikhail Gorbachev and workers at the Minsk tractor plant on 26 February; from the "Vremya" newscast]

[Excerpts] The president began his tour of Belorussia with a visit to the Minsk tractor plant, the largest production association in the republic. Today, this enterprise's production is well known not only in our country, but on all continents. So that you may imagine the scale of the Minsk tractor manufacturers' experts, we shall mention just one figure: The proceeds from equipment sold abroad amount to 200 million currency rubles [R]. That is only one-fifth of what is produced here.

Of course, the scale of production is impressive, but the scale of the problems confronting those who work here is no smaller. They were immediately the subject of the conversation in the enterprise's workshops. Obviously, this did not just deal with factory matters, for they are directly connected with the state of the economy and its transfer to market relations. The severing of economic ties and the acute shortage of raw materials and assembly components—all this is closely interwoven with politics. This could not fail to form the subject of conversation with the workers, who were today, perhaps, the most biased interviewers of the president. He himself asked no fewer questions. Mikhail Sergeyevich was interested in people's attitudes to the policies currently being pursued in the country, to the forthcoming referendum and to the Union treaty. But in nearly every workshop the first questions were about the forthcoming price increase, and about how compensation will proceed.

[Begin recording] [Gorbachev] If we take prices for food, the main thing, we will start with this...

[Unidentified man, interrupting] Well, food...

[Gorbachev, interrupting] Yes. Well, for food—100 percent compensation. And fixed prices will be set, and not what so often happens—where did you get that? Where did you get hold of it?

[Unidentified man] We ourselves, ourselves...

[Gorbachev, interrupting] Yes, yes. So this is what, some proportion has gone—it will go toward this price rise, and will be fixed. On the other hand, this is very important, and I would ask you to understand. Because all of this with prices is so distorted, that you can't go out on to the market. Wholesale prices, like for your output, had to be leveled. Purchase prices—how else will a collective farm manage on the market? It will take its due, so it is better to get it under control. [end recording]

Mikhail Sergeyevich stressed today that the state spends R137 billion on compensation for production of food in the country, and receives from its sale barely R100 billion. And so, raising prices today means correcting our distorted economy, if only partially, and establishing order in distribution. The existing prices have not been touched for 20-25 years, and now, of course, you cannot set them free at once. This would be the same as creating economic chaos. They have to be released gradually, and during the initial period, without freeing this process from state supervision.

[Begin recording] [Gorbachev] We want to do it like this: Not to seek advantage for the state at present, even though things are difficult with money, with finance, but in general to take the road of compensation; 100 percent for food, for the whole rise, and for other goods, 100 percent, too.

[Unidentified man] This is the absurdity you get: You read one thing in the newsppaer, and in the end you get something different. They said that prices...

[Gorbachev interrupting] It's not a newspaper—I'm telling you! [laughter]

[Unidentified man] When will there be an end to those who speculate and sabotage?

[Gorbachev] That is what I wanted to ask you. [passage omitted]

[Gorbachev] I have issued a decree on workers' control. Do you make use of this decree, workers' control? Why [words indistinct] So it means they are not allowing it, but there is a decree on workers' control. [words indistinct]—with rights, with rights, to control absolutely

everything, the depots, and the shops, and so on. That's the first thing. Second, since they say—the militia and the KGB, to whom we have given the task of checking this, of uncovering the mafia—they say that they do not even have the right to check when...[words indistinct]...I have issued a decree which is now being criticized, which has allowed the law-enforcement bodies to perform checks. I do not regret it. Things have to be checked.

[Unidentified man] Mikhail Sergeyevich, one more question...

[Gorbachev, interrupting] Have you understood the idea? You have to get a move on.

[Unidentified man] Yes, that's clear. [end recording]

One of the workers told us today that when he shook hands with the president, he forgot all his prepared questions in his excitement. As you can see, that was far from the case with all of them. There was no inhibition or smoothing over of problems. The times are not like that. You will agree, the country is now experiencing a critical moment, and the workers asked the president to set out his position once more and once again.

[Begin Gorbachev recording] I, personally, see my task as president as being to create decrees which enable the people themselves and local bodies to perform checks. If the question is raised of the president having to come to Minsk, to Belorussia, and check from which shop things have been removed by the back door, how many presidents would we need then! [end recording]

More on Question-Answer Session

LD2802153691 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1750 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Question and answer session with USSR President M.S. Gorbachev in Minsk tractor plant on 26 February; Gorbachev reads out and replies to written questions—recorded]

[Text] Comrade Grishan asks: How do I feel in the two roles of president and general secretary?

I am sure that at the present very complicated stage, which is a transitional one in the life of the country and of the party itself, the uniting of these posts is to some extent perhaps even detrimental in that it restricts my work as president. All the same, I think that with the new structure, where there is a deputy general secretary, this is still essential, for the party itself needs support. Also, the president should have as his base a definite political force, and I consider that our party is such a force. For all the criticism being directed against the party, that does not remove the part which it has played and continues to play. We shall never allow ourselves to swallow the bait which says, you see, that the party has become obsolete, that the party is guilty of everything, and is to blame for everything. No! The party is millions of people representing all strata of our society, and such an accusation, let me tell you, is a provocation with certain political aims, and not in the interests of our common cause. In any event, I will do everything to avoid letting down the working people and Communists, among others. Ultimately, the party...[changes thought] I must tell you directly: information coming in now shows that after this, communists overcoming serious illnesses and experiences have now started operating more actively. Both in soviets at all levels and in labor collectives, they are raising their voices in defense of the policy of perestroyka and are actively participating in all discussions, and the elaboration of policy, and this helps the new authorities and those who have truly taken on the burden of responsibility for implementing the policy of perestroyka.

Here are some questions from Comrade Batura. He has touched upon several questions. Lenin was very solicitous in his treatment of his comrades in arms Kamenev, Zinovyev, Trotskiy, and others. Despite mistakes committed by them, Vladimir Ilyich did not expel them, but corrected them. In the years of perestroyka, you have lost Yeltsin, Yakovlev, Shevardnadze, Bakatin and, finally, Ryzhkov. What is your own attitude to this?

Well, as they say, those surnames have been well muddled up here. First, Comrade Aleksandr Nikolayevich Yakovlev is one of my advisers. He was a member of the Presidential Council and remains an adviser. I intend to propose Comrade Bakatin to the Supreme Soviet for a place on the Security Council. As for Comrade Nikolay Ivanovich Ryzhkov, with whom I have come a long way, starting in 1982 in the search for an answer to the questions with which life has confronted society, we have been and remain friends to the end. In particular, Nikolay Ivanovich is already home now. I had a chat with him recently. He is already feeling quite well now, although it happened as it did. So, the illness has put him out of action, so to speak. I think, perhaps, it is his right and sovereignty to decide what he should do in future.

As for Comrade Shevardnadze, you know the whole story. To be frank, it was my choice of Comrade Shevardnadze, whom I have known since our Komsomol years, for the post of foreign minister, at the time it surprised many people not only in the Soviet Union, but throughout the world as well, especially in the world. But as it turned out he was the very man who really made a huge contribution toward the implementation of perestroyka as regards its foreign direction.

His decision—well, you know it was his own decision. I personally did not share in the choice he made. Now he is setting up a diplomatic association which will be uniting the country's creative forces on a voluntary basis, which will be cooperating with official bodies, and will be providing their analyses and voice its proposals. I think it will be useful.

Finally, the name of Comrade Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin remains. By the way, there was a question on it.

I think everything would have been very simple, Comrades, if everything had boiled down to personal relations—incidentally to the personal relations between Gorbachev and Yeltsin. No, I think, that is not the point. It is a question of two political lines and of program goals. This is where the differences lie. If earlier they were probably of a tactical nature—something about which Comrade Yeltsin has also spoken about on more than one occasion—I see that having gone onto the platform with proposals of the kind that have been made, then this is no doubt the result of his own choice, and it reveals his goals and tasks. I consider that they differ from the goals of perestroyka, and because of this everything is considerably more complicated.

The position of the president means that he has to deal not just with his own party, the party which took you forward and which supports you, but with other political movements and with all the strata of our people. I think this is something Communists have to understand. Sometimes they complain to me that I am, as it were, meeting representatives of other political and public movements, as if I were betraying the Communists, the party. I do not think that is a serious thing to say; moreover the party has to get rid of that kind of sectarian view. It has stated that it rejects its power monopoly and is willing to cooperate at all levels with all patriotic forces interested in the prosperity of our country. I share that point of view, and that is how I am going to act, and not in any other way. I ask Communists to bear this in mind.

But there are many questions here about the system of taxes. Comrades, everything that we are now carrying out—it is not popular. It is of an extraordinary nature. It is calculated for 1991. All the republics got together and signed an economic agreement for 1991 in order to bring the situation under control. Therefore even if right now you press me hard into a corner as they say, we cannot give up all of the tax measures and all of the financial measures which we are implementing, because this is necessary in order to cut the deficit and to normalize the financial situation—at least to take large steps.

The so-called democratic forces have officially announced the overthrow of the existing system, something which is forbidden in accordance with the existing USSR Constitution. Nevertheless, they are not meeting with any rebuff or resistance. Perhaps that state of affairs is to the liking of the present leadership of the country and party?

Political struggle is a normal thing. The struggle for power using political means and within the framework of the Constitution and democratic processes through elections is a normal thing, a normal thing. But a political struggle for power which proceeds, notwithstanding the laws and the Constitution, and which uses demagogy and incitement—these are serious matters. I think that we have to prevent such approaches. We have to give a firm no! In your presence, in the presence of representatives of one of the major workers' labor collectives in our country, I want to say that I think we have to say a firm no—it will not succeed—to all those who would like to be deflected onto an anti-Constitutional road.

This is where I see the most serious challenge from Yeltsin—it is essentially an anti-Constitutional call. It will not succeed. I am sure that the people in its present state, when it is expecting improvements, when such burdens have befallen it, both in production and in the market and so on, I am sure that the people will view such firebrands as people from whom human life and the interests of the people mean nothing. They are people who have simply been driven mad by the political struggle and by their own ambitions. It is fiddling while Rome burns. I see this. I come out categorically, and I make use of all the opportunities that are at the disposal of the president. [applause]

Do you not think that our foreign policy activity suffered a failure, since those who are the stronger are ruling in the world once again? Against this background, the country's defense capability is declining. This is a question from Comrade Pavlovich, isn't it? He is secretary of the GPZ 11 [expansion unknown].

I consider that a very important question has been asked. I would like to take advantage of this question to fully elucidate it. I am certain, Comrades, that the foreign policy which we have been conducting in recent years is in accord with our fundamental interests, that is the first thing. For, the former policy which laid its stake on admitting the inevitability of confrontation and military conflict was an extremely dangerous policy. People in many countries and on many continents began to understand this. In the arms race we literally reached a situation when the world was virtually on the point of blowing up.

We exhausted our economy. The United States, which has a total product 2.5 times ours, also had difficulty supporting this arms race. We need to get away from the arms race, but not by undermining our defense capacity, I must say, but on equal terms, by reducing the level of confrontation. We are achieving this by traveling along the path of signing new treaties with regard to medium-range missiles, conventional weapons, and a 50 percent reduction in nuclear weapons.

We need to cooperate with the world. We lose out from not cooperating normally with the whole developed world and not making use of the possessions and achievements of the other part of civilization, just as that other part loses out. We should be included in these processes in a normal manner. We should restore normal relations with the peoples of other countries. No one wants to be consumed in a nuclear war. Therefore, in its main elements, this is a right and correct policy, and experience confirms this.

Further. Has our country's defense capacity decreased because of this? No, I assure you. I should say that we are conducting matters with the Americans on equal terms. We wish to construct policy honestly with that country. Comrades, without the normalization of relations with

that country nothing would have happened in the world, therefore, this is a serious achievement. And this is just a beginning. All of the relations are fragile [khrupkiy]. They are now being tested out. Everything could, as they say, fly apart and be destroyed. Therefore, it is necessary to be very responsible about judging, making a hasty judgement about this foreign policy and our relations with the United States, and so on.

With regard to Iraq—which is the most fundamental and important part. At present, when we are moving over to resolving conflicts by political means, [changes thought] we went in for this in Afghanistan, we went in for this in Angola and Namibia. We just about reached a settlement of the Cambodian conflict. Finally, we are trying to reach this most chronic, most complicated conflict in the Near East.

This is very important. Are we capable of resolving it by political means or will everything continue to be resolved by force, and therefore the cult of force will reign in international relations. This, then, is what is at issue—very serious matters—how we are going to live in the world.

Therefore, at this moment—when such a militarily strong country moves against a small Arab country to resolve a problem, disputes which it seems to have, and then occupies it, and acts as an aggressor—our position should be one of principle. We took this position, and adhere to it. But we have stood up for, and to the end we stand up for, not having recourse to military actions, and if there is recourse to these, then only as a means of pressure to achieve a political solution of this question. That is why in these acute days we got into contact with Iraq, and we continue to do so now. By the way, today as I was leaving Moscow, Iraqi President Husayn during the night sent a telegram to us, to the USSR, with the statement that he was withdrawing his troops from Iraq. [shouts from hall: "from Kuwait"] from Kuwait, from Kuwait. It is even being said that there are already signs that he has really started to do so. We urgently informed the United States; we gave instructions to Vorontsov, our representative at the Security Council, to immediately start to examine this statement by Husayn in the Security Council [murmuring from hall]. What did I say? Yes, in the Security Council.

Thus, we are acting and continuing this line of ours which we are conducting. We must achieve a halt to the military operations, and prevent great bloodshed.

Oh, Comrade Pavlovich has signed this. I can already recognize him by his handwriting. But I will have a look now at what is there: Why is the Western way of life being extolled everywhere now? Where is there objective information on this point? If everything is so good there, perhaps we too should follow their lead.

I think we should do what I have spoken about. We should be open to the world and the world will be open and cooperate with us. We should take everything which is acceptable to us and exchange all the positive things. That is the most reliable way. We should conduct trade and cooperate in cultural ties, youth tourism, and so on and so forth. There are problems in all societies, including in that same America. I have spoken about this more than once with the President of the United States. The recession, financial problems, debts, and their own problems are growing there, but they are problems at a different level. Moreover, we do not need to copy anythng. We know what that resulted in. We have to seek ways in a normal manner, within the framework of our socialist choice, using all the positive things which other peoples have. Each country, even within the framework of the West, has its own choice, its own peculiarities, traditions and approaches, its own approaches to social issues, to forms of ownership—mixed, not mixed, and so on. Therefore, each country should proceed along its own path on the basis of its traditions and the realities in which it lives today, taking account of the experience of others. That is the approach we should follow.

So, I have tried, albeit briefly, to answer the questions which you have asked. Thank you for the meeting, and thank you to all those who have displayed warm feelings. I have sensed the warmth, even in conditions where I have heard many just, critical observations, and demands leveled at the country's president and leadership. Thank you.

Newspaper Cites Chernobyl Remarks

PM2802142991 Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 28 Feb 91 p 1

[TASS special correspondent report: "Times Demand Responsibility. M.S. Gorbachev's Stay in Belorussia"]

[Excerpt] Minsk, 26 Feb—Tremendous tasks are being tackled in the country and are cardinally changing our life. The working people of Belorussia are performing this complex work with great responsibility. Reliable people! This was said by the USSR president today during his first meeting on the territory of the "Minskiy Traktornyy Zavod im. V.I. Lenin" Association.

Workers and engineering and technical personnel spoke bitterly of the disruption of interfarm ties. Naturally, the conversation repeatedly touched on problems associated with eliminating the aftermath of Chernobyl.

Last Friday the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet was the first to adopt a law "On Social Protection for Citizens Who Suffered as a Result of the Chernobyl Nuclear Electric Power Station Disaster." It defines benefits and compensation for the victims. But Belorussia cannot bear this financial burden on its own. So, the people of the republic pin great hopes on the president and the Union government.

M.S. Gorbachev's opinion: "I will be in Minsk today. Tomorrow I will go to Gomel, and the day after tomorrow to Mogilev. I want to see everything, to look with my own eyes. I have with me the comrades who are tackling this problem. We want to adopt a Union law to

protect the victims, so as to create guarantees for people, wherever they may have ended up today. Work on the law is being completed. It is now being considered in the Cabinet of Ministers and the Union parliament. After elaboration, we will submit this document to the Supreme Soviet for examination." [passage omitted]

PRAVDA Rounds Up Activities

PM2802124991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 27 Feb 91 Second Edition pp 1, 2

[Report by special correspondents A. Nikitin, A. Simurov, and A. Ulitenok: "Time for Hard, Honest Work"]

[Text] Minsk—USSR President Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev arrived in Minsk 26 February. The first thing he did was hasten to the Minsk tractor plant. What will the farmers be greeting the spring with, what equipment will their Belorussian machine builders be supplying them with?

You have to pay tribute to the creators of the celebrated "Belarus" tractor, who had arranged a kind of display of today's and tomorrow's might in the experimental shop. Not only the powerful machines, but those which will be essential to lessees and farmers tomorrow. So perestroyka was visibly knocking at the door of the giant plant's shops.

The president lingered near them:

"Their assistance is very much needed in the countryside at the moment. It is a pity you rarely see them on the fields as yet..."

Too true. On the day before the president's visit, 374 machines came off the plant assembly line. The vast majority are of the "strong man" variety. But those that were very precisely designated as "lessees" and "farmers" are still undergoing tests... There are not that many of the old engine blocks.

Like the whole country, the plant is now at the crossroads. The market has set technical progress here a rigorous test. Exports have dropped. The day before the visit, only 73 tractors were sent off for export. A miserly amount, of course. Why is this?

Aleksandr Zyuz, leader of a group of plant designers, explained: "Our leaders both at the plant and at the ministry seem to want to make do with the domestic market alone. They are not developing prestigious models and do not attach particular importance to design work. Yet we cannot break into the world market without it. It will be impossible to update and restructure the plant without the hard currency that we have earned ourselves."

M.S. Gorbachev agreed with the arguments put forward by many designers and technologists.

Scientific and technical progress must receive backing as a highly important state strategy. But how is this to be done? Requests for subsidies will not do, nor will there be hard currency donations as there were in the past. In short, Zyuz and his colleagues are right. Can we really cut rates of tax—as the plant workers asked—on profits initially earned from innovations?

At the main assembly production line where problems, as it were, also assembled one on top of the other and form a very large pile at a stroke, workers told Gorbachev openly about them—trenchantly and even with some humor. The lunch break ended but the shop bosses delayed starting up the production line.

"They are afraid that it will stop early," fitter S. Yasinovskiy said. "People here are not too keen on calls to work honestly, if only there were some work..."

Tractor fitter V. Davidovskaya was one of countless people who spoke to the president.

"How is the work going? With difficulty. We put the utmost effort into meeting an order—and shipments are held up."

That is indeed the case. I. Kuleshov, general director of the tractor plant, said that last year, for the first time in their 45-year history, the men of Minsk had failed to supply rural dwellers with 1,000 tractors. The severance of vertical economic ties is taking its toll. Regrettably, the plant workers said in unison, the relevant government resolution is being poorly implemented.

The RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic], for example, only guarantees 70-percent deliveries of sheet iron. But the difficult, crucial sowing campaign lies ahead. Yet last year the Minsk tractor plant owed the agro-industrial complex 5 million rubles [R] worth of spare parts. There has not as yet been any sign of improvement. So, partner plants in the Ukraine are doggedly refusing to supply asbestos linings. As a result, for the second year running, the "Belarus" tractor builders have failed to produce the clutches rural machine operators so badly need.

Or take the following telling facts: At the moment the plant is forced to produce "blind" vehicles—they are lacking 220,000 headlights, simple as that! The "fixers" are literally rushed off their feet: Some 90 percent of the vehicles coming off the assembly line are incomplete. Basically, the tractor plant workers anxiously stated, the republics' distorted interpretation of economic sovereignty has effectively legalized industrial fraud: At the moment one tractor is equivalent to two freight car loads of lumber or the same quantity of cement. The enterprise has already assigned 2,000 vehicles to "barter deals" of this kind...

The problem of clear-cut economic agreements when concluding interrepublic contracts is acute as a result of this, the president's interlocutors said. Steel foundry worker V. Poleshchuk reckons, for example, that the

time has come for people's deputies at all levels to step up their work considerably. The president and the Minsk workers agreed that the numerous complex problems cannot be solved without concluding the Union treaty. Real sovereignty for the republics within the framework of a renewed center is the path to the creation of a single Union.

In this connection, the workers highlighted some other questions of day-to-day life.

"You get high contract prices on the market and now in the stores," fitter M. Milashevskiy believes. "But our wage rates, those of state enterprise workers, are conventional, bureaucratic ones, if you don't mind my saying so. Why can't we have equal opportunities in competition with other types of ownership, as it is fashionable to say at the moment?.."

Answering these and other questions in detail in the shops and, later, at a meeting in the Culture Center, M.S. Gorbachev said:

The market will rectify many of these problems, of course. But one cannot count on this alone. Many countries using market relations have not gotten rich, alas. The profound structural perestroyka of the entire national economy is very important, as well as the forms of economic relations in the basic component of production that are new to us.

As you said yourself, vertical links have now collided with horizontal, union contracts—interrepublic ones. As a result many ties are being broken, while the new ones are not yet tried and tested by time. I think there is a need now to see how the contracts and agreements that were concluded recently are working. The same can be said of prices. One must not only analyze why they are what they are. This would appear to have been dealt with already. We must exercise a more effective influence on them, not putting off till tomorrow what we can do today.

Naturally, the conversation more than once touched on problems connected with the elimination of the aftermath of Chernobyl. As is known, the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic [SSR] Supreme Soviet was the first to adopt a law "On the Social Protection of Citizens Affected by the Disaster at Chernobyl Nuclear Power Station." It fixes benefits and compensation for the victims. But Belorussia alone cannot bear the financial burden. So the people are pinning great hopes on the president and the Union government.

M.S. Gorbachev's view: "I will be in Minsk today. Tomorrow I go to Gomel, and the day after tomorrow to Mogilev. I want to see everything with my own eyes. I have with me the comrades who are dealing with this problem. We want to adopt a Union law protecting the victims, in order to create guarantees for people, wherever they are now."

The increase in retail prices that is in the offing was another painful topic. Answering the workers' questions, the president explained: "If we introduce new prices, they will definitely be preceded by the payment of financial compensation prior to the increase."

The conversation with the workers in the shops was continued at the association's Culture Palace. The meeting was also attended by representatives of other enterprises.

I.I. Kuleshov, the Minsk tractor plant's general director, dwelt on the problems that are preventing the association from improving production efficiency, noting in particular that the country's government should treat questions of scientific and technical progress as priority tasks. The enterprise's transition to market relations is a complex and painful process—even when everyone is in favor of the market—given the absence of the requisite and adequately developed infrastructure in the country's economy.

Then S.M. Voychinskiy, deputy chief designer at the Minsk tractor plant; I.M. Grunskiy, deputy director of production assembly; N.I. Vorobyev, chief of the bureau for the technical monitoring of incoming goods; V.A. Poleshchuk, foundry cleaner; Ye.S. Titovich, production engineer; N.S. Krutikov, leader of a team of arc welders; G.A. Belevich, deputy general director of Minsk's "Luch" Footwear Association; and K.A. Ustymchuk, director of the Minsk motorcycle and bicycle plant, one by one came to the various microphones set up in the auditorium. They talked about the burning issues—about the problems of life in society in these difficult, troubled times. The main topic was that connected with the integrity of the USSR... Questions were raised concerning relations between republics, conversion, the referendum, the Union treaty, and legislators' activities.

Addressing the meeting, M.S. Gorbachev said, in particular, that the main task today is to get the Union treaty concluded swiftly. He stressed that the republics must be their own bosses within the framework of their own sovereignty and new powers. Therefore, the president noted, the center will retain only that which all the republics need: defense, facilities in the fuel and energy spheres, railroad transport, communications, and some other spheres.

The head of state announced that the authorized representatives of the republics who are working on the draft Union treaty will complete it by the beginning of March, whereupon the document will be sent to all members of the Federation Council. He expressed the belief that the upcoming 17 March USSR referendum on the preservation of the Union will present opportunities for making confident progress toward a renewed Union. I see our Union as strong republics and a strong center, the president added.

Responding to a request for comment on the recent television interview with the head of the Russian legislature, M.S. Gorbachev said: It would all be very simple

if it were merely a matter of personalities. What we actually have are two political lines and different aims. That is where we part company. In my view, the aims of the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet are at odds with the aims of perestroyka, as it was conceived, the USSR president said.

The Belorussian machine builders backed the president's view that now is not the time for narrow-minded political confrontation; it is time for harmonious, hard, but honest work.

The evening sitting of the republic's legislature was unexpectedly interrupted for an unscheduled meeting with the country's president.

Addressing the legislators, M.S. Gorbachev announced that during his tour of Belorussia he intended to visit areas affected by the Chernobyl accident. We highly appreciate, he said, the work you have done here in the context of the preparation of a law on the protection of all people who are experiencing problems as a result of the disaster. As you know, the Union budget—and it is not so big nowadays—contains a section concerned with our serious disasters, abover all the aftermath of the Chernobyl accident. You can be sure that none of the republics will leave you to cope with the tragedy alone. Despite all the problems and all the complexities, there are things which take precedence.

Allow me, the president continued, within the limits of this brief meeting, to tell the working people of Belorussia and the republic's Supreme Soviet that we very much appreciate the balanced, responsible stance adopted by Belorussia and your supreme organs of power on the fundamental questions of perestroyka, particularly now that we have embarked on tackling them. It is a principled, responsible stance. It implies an awareness that life must be changed for the better, but it also implies a serious attitude toward everything that previous generations have done before us. Implicit in it are all the progressive demands dictated by life, which are essential if we are going to change our enormous Union for the better. I say this not because I am trying to play up to you, but to state a fact. Do not be carried along by all the winds blowing from the right, then from the left, sometimes very strongly. The most difficult thing is maintaining our course, sticking to our basic direction, strengthening the center forces, and acting decisively.

At the end of the first day of his stay in Belorussia, M.S. Gorbachev addressed the collective of the republican Academy of Sciences and representatives of Minsk's creative unions and intelligentsia.

The USSR president laid flowers at the monument to V.I. Lenin.

N.I. Dementey, chairman of the Belorussian SSR Supreme Soviet, participated in the meetings.

Further on Gorbachev's Visit to Gomel Oblast

LD2802093291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1910 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Speech by USSR President Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev at a meeting with labor collectives in Gomel on 27 February, including answers to written questions—recorded]

[Text] [Gorbachev] Well, I have already said that the main aim of my present trip to your republic includes two main factors. First and foremost I—and I put this in first place—regard this simply as...my moral duty to visit those places which were overtaken by such misfortune after the Chernobyl accident. Somebody has said here somewhat late, but it is probably a correct remark, but now perhaps this is all the more so of great significance, important significance, this is in order to take a look at how things are turning out. I don't know if the weather here will allow us or not; today we wanted to fly, but it did not turn out that way. We traveled for several hours using cars. But all the same I had a look at those villages and settlements which have already been abandoned—one of them in Vetkovskiy Rayon, for 1,000 inhabitants. We traveled along empty streets. On the way out we traveled, on the outskirts, along streets with newly-built homes, cottages, probably built one to two years ago. Of course it is painful, and there is the impression: This is a calamity. People gave up their homes. They abandoned everything, and the land where they were born and lived and where their nearest and dearest are buried. All in all this is a great human misfortune, not only from the point of view of everyday existence. This is truly a human calamity, and on the whole it is hard on your feelings here in such an atmosphere.

We also visited and talked with many inhabitants in the rayon center of Vetka. Afterwards there was also a conversation in the rayon executive committee, and people stood alongside and the entire conversation was relayed so that they could hear what we were saying. Tomorrow we envisage that we will also visit Mogilev oblast. But a picture for today is already taking shape, and the problems will have to be considered—appraised and considered—once again, taking into account the present situation.

That is why it looks as if we are coming to such an opinion. Incidentally, this proposal was heard here; we were talking in the course of the journey saying that, evidently, it is high time for an examination of what is being done and how the implementation of the decisions which have been adopted is being carried out at a sitting of the country's Cabinet of Ministers. Quite a few decisions have already been adopted. A lot has already been done. But nevertheless, we should have a look at what has not been completed. On the other hand, we have to consider new issues as well. New issues. Where we need to rely on the whole Union for support, we should once again adopt those decisions which need to be adopted, because this is a serious problem. It requires

everyone's participation, support, and assistance to the Belorussian people. This is the first thing. That is why, probably, or rather now more than probably, I am coming firmly to the opinion that this issue should be submitted to a sitting of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers in such a formulation.

I think that—I won't dig the surnames up now—one of the speakers, that is one of the women representing the teachers, I think she was a deputy headmistress of a school, was very right here in saying that—and she apologized for such a frivolous manner—it is about time the scientific brotherhood dealt with it and gave a reliable and competent counsel based on their knowledge, on a trustworthy forecast, regarding the future life in this or that zone, this or that settlement, and clarified this fundamental issue. I must say that this question is very correct. Generally speaking, we should now concentrate all our efforts on it. Why? Well, if the solution of the issue says that people cannot be here, a lot of troubles will come as result of it. If the solution of the issue says that people can live here providing that they observe certain requirements and implement certain measures, then serious decisions will be needed again, and that is all. People should know and the authorities should know the consequences concerning them, and what to do in this situation. That is why this is a serious issue. It is, as they say, issue number one. We have to resolve it. Of course, we have to implement the programs which we have in view. I realize that as for a formulation concerning resources for this zone—from the point of view that these programs must be fulfilled, as well as everything which has been planned here—it goes without saying that their allocation should be under control and they should get here.

This concerns both the republic and the center. Wherever this question is related to other oblasts, krays, and republics, I think every leader, every labor collective understands what this is about and will respond to it. I think this question is probably being asked correctly, and I shall speak about this. This is our common problem, and nevertheless, here too priority has to be given to the enterprises working in this zone, because all in all there is a tendency for people to drift away from the oblast: Instead of constant growth, the population has fallen by several tens of thousands. That is why wherever it is possible to keep the people, we have to create conditions for life to go on, as they say. That will be a very important stabilizing feature for all the processes taking place here, in this particular situation, in the Gomel area.

I think it is apt to put the question of having to have here a research center, an important one; its organization has been dragged out, and this question has to be solved without delay. Of course, a system of medical services should be organized, set up, without delay, based on what is available to us today, so that the people can get regular consultations and know the situation; so that wherever someone has some trouble with their health, this, let's say, is noticed in good time to come to their assistance. I understand that improving the state of health is a major problem, and I feel that without the center, without the help and support of other republics, it is difficult for you to solve it here, and I think all this should be examined.

I agree we need a law on social protection. I have a draft of this law here, in my case. It is ready as a working document. I have already spoken about this, but I shall repeat it here, since people probably want me to repeat this once again at this meeting. In the immediate future, after it is considered by experts at a working level, it will be handed over for examination and adoption by the Supreme Soviet.

There are a number of other proposals here. We have spoken about them. All this leads precisely to the fact that we again have to take a comprehensive look at the whole course of execution.

I don't think we are going to drag this out, and we shall immediately get down to preparing this issue in the Cabinet of Ministers in order to review comprehensively this whole situation.

I would just like once more, simply as a human being, to express my sympathy to the people, the families who have been so shaken by this misfortune, right down to the foundations, so to speak; and not only that, but it affects their entire style of life. I think the Belorussians are entitled to count on all manner of assistance and support, both moral and material, being given to them. I do not think one can get used to this misfortune, resign oneself to it and in a way calm down. There is no basis for this, especially as we constantly see new problems arising. That's why we have to act.

That's as much as we've got on this main subject, which worries all of you, which worries us, and because of which I am visiting you here, in the Gomel lands.

In their speeches, comrades have drawn my attention—as the president of the country—to the issues which indeed are causing great concern for everyone, for the whole of our country's population, for all the peoples of our multinational state. Indeed, we are all concerned today by the fate of the Union. The comrades are right in saying that we surely do not have to get to, go back to a state of feudal fragmentation in order to satisfy some people's political ambitions or separatist claims; so that later, having seen what this leads to, we start again the difficult road, having broken up that which was created over centuries or decades and which needs to be renewed and improved but does not need to be destroyed or disrupted. I think our people on 17 March will firmly speak for the preservation of the Union, for the renewal of this Union on the principles of a federation, leading to a union, a renewed union of sovereign republics. And this will lead to every people, every republic—as a result of redistribution of powers—well, the formation of a new center with its new role. We will get the Union we need.

We are moving away from a unitary state and coming to a normal, living federation, which we need. Strong

republics with broad powers, and that means responsibility and rights as well, are necessary. A center which will effectively and full-bloodedly serve this powerful united state in the interests of all the peoples is necessary, a center which will support and develop and enrich the relations on which this Union stands. It cannot be otherwise. Look, we have only just started on the policy of sovereignties—and I am not talking about sovereignties in the insulting sense. But when some people have understood sovereignty as a local dictate and egoism, then this has turned out as isolation, autarky, the breaking of economic relations and living relations between labor collectives, and this reflects painfully on human relations, on production activities, and this means on all production life and the social sphere.

If this process intensifies and takes on such acute forms, I have to say that we will ruin things, and it is this which is being felt just now. Look how the whole of our society is in a fever. For this reason I support this anxiety, I share it completely, and I want once more in this hall, on Gomel land, to speak out firmly in favor of the renewed, the preservation of our renewed Union.

Here in one way or another the question arises about the fate of our economy. There are several questions here. The first is of an urgent nature, and which we intend to examine at the next session of the Cabinet of Ministers, probably no later than 4 March; it is on that day which this session is planned for. It will concern the process of fulfilling the economic agreement for 1991 which the republics signed, and on how the presidential decrees on maintaining economic relations are being implemented. Everything which has been done, was done late, in January, as you remember, practically at the end of December, in January. This had some stabilizing effect, but it did not comnpletely solve this problem. But for the moment the danger is still there, and a break in relations threatens a greater destabilzation of our economy, and a fall in production.

What does a fall mean? What does a halt and fall in production mean? It means fewer wages, less production, fewer wages, fewer profits, or no profits at all, which means there is nothing to contribute either to the local or republican or Union budget. That means the future of all the plans and programs. Today that's what economic links mean if you think all this through. Nevertheless, republic leaders insist: Don't send production there until we get this, that, and the other from there. That is why we say the most important thing is to preserve the economic space, the Union market, where enterprises are the main players and they themselves should set up contacts, maintain them, and build them up. Now we have to preserve what we've already had. If here it's on instructions of the city, there on instructions of the oblast, somewhere else on instructions of the republic, and then on instructions of a Union agency, then, you know, having moved away from a Union diktat, we shall arrive at such anarchy, such diktat, and such commands that the managers will simply start howling.

[Unidentified speaker] (?They are howling right now.)

[Gorbachev] They are right now, are they?

[Speaker] They are. Right now.

[Gorbachev] They are. Well, I haven't heard it yet. Although we had a sharp discussion, so far we were still using human tongues. That's it.

Consequently, this is an urgent question and it has to be solved. If we have to use harsh measures, we have to do it. If someone has to be grabbed by the hand and stopped, he has to be stopped. We want to invite to this sitting of the Cabinet of Ministers the leaders of the republics' governments, but I thought—this idea was suggested to me in Minsk yesterday—that we should also invite the leaders of republican industrial associations there, so that they could say their piece to the government, the Cabinet of Ministers, both Union and republican. They play games to see who can throw the ball into whose goal. Meanwhile, labor collectives are losing weeks, months; all these have gone by while we were searching for these approaches, and I fear that if we hang about now very dangerous processes will get under way. They have already turned dangerous, and this could lead to simply grave consequences, the gravest. This is a pressing task.

Another urgent task is the stabilization of finances and the consumer market. In connection with this... there is much that you say that is correct when you criticize or make remarks and proposals about taxes and those measures which are now being implemented based on government decrees and decisions. You are right in what you say. But it would have been right if you were speaking in a normal year, when these economic processes were proceeding in a normal cycle. But you see we are talking about an extraordinary situation, about the year 1991, for which we adopted this economic agreement which takes into account this extraordinary situation, the transitional nature of it. It is namely in this extraordinary situation that these extraordinary measures are being adopted.

Therefore Comrades, however much pressure you now apply on the president, on the government, and on the republican government, we can't give in here; we have to conduct these measures. Otherwise, this process will acquire an even more acute nature, and then you'll say: If you saw all of this, if you knew all of this, why didn't you.... But you are already saying now: More resoluteness and firmness and we'll support you. You know that in the main firmness is often unpopular, so do support such firmness, and resoluteness [words indistinct]. It is necessary to endure; otherwise this endless process will wear out—has already worn all of us out [audience murmurs]. The person that has strong nerves is perhaps still agreeable to being subjected to nagging or stirring up, but I think that one should not keep the people in such a state. The thought heard here about the priority of the agro-industrial complex in agriculture was correct. We need to go in several directions here in order to get

the potential of the agrarian-industrial complex going. First, this means the reform of economic relations and the inclusion of incentives; more economic freedom for our producers, producers of goods, in the countryside, means more interest. We need to have a look at relations concerning land. Where land is untilled, all of it has to be taken into account and inventories made. Where it is used inefficiently, it also needs to be taken in hand and given over to those who will use it, be it a personal private plot or a farm economy or a new cooperative that is being set up, and so on. But it is necessary that where there were old farmsteads, where people worked, where the soil is good, where there was some kind of arable land, natural pasture—all of this must work. It needs to be handed over so that all of this works.

All this needs to be done prior to the spring, so that it has an effect on the next harvest, without losing time. This work is being done, and it must be done thoroughly. Such work must be based on that approach on which we ... about which, on the basis of which, in connection with which, as it were, there is already agreement in our country, namely: Let all forms of property, all forms of life and work prove their advantages. The question should not be posed—generallly speaking this has not been proved, either theoretically or practically—that the collective farm form, even the state farm form, the cooperative form has exhausted itself. Indeed, not a single of our collective farms has ever really been a collective farm and has ever enjoyed the rights of a collective farm. Let's give it these conditions and let them still show what they can do. Many of them, even in these conditions, are showing what they can do. After all, have a look at our front-ranking collectives. What the managers of these labor collectives had to overcome in order first and foremost to achieve this victory, to get rid of the command system! That is why it is necessary to steer a course toward reforming these relations, to actuate powerful incentives.

People ought to be made interested. Assistance for the social development of the countryside is necessary. Modernization of the base is needed—all this is very important—and especially, as a matter of top priority, the modernization of the food and processing industry. This is the shortest path, and it is three, four, five times cheaper than the further buildup of output. Losses amount to up to 30 percent and up to 40 percent in vegetables and fruit. That is why the entire infrastructure—processing, storage, this kind of thing—all this must be resolved in the first place. There is a program, it must be tackled, and the new capacities which are being freed both in the defense sector of the economy and in other ones, in the sectors of our industry, must be deployed here and not allowed to find their own way.

These were remarks which were brought up here. I wanted to respond. Simply agree with them, support them, but not simply support: This is precisely what the leadership of the country and, I hope, the republic, have in mind.

Questions. Esteemed Mikhail Sergeyevich, one has to be naive to expect some sort of miracle to follow your visit to the Gomel oblast. Well, a realistic message. [laughter] I am convinced that the overcoming of our difficulties lies in our own hands. But the Gomal inhabitants are very hopeful that the pain of Chernobyl won't bypass the country's Supreme Soviet and the government. I agree. I have already said it. Hopes are justified only when they are supported by actions. We believe in those actions. I agree with the spirit of this message.

A worker of the elektroapparatura [electrical equipment] works asks you to answer the following questions: What are the measures the country's leadership has in view to restore broken economic ties among enterprises? President's decrees concerning this issue are not being executed as yet. Comrades, I said what we are going to do.

A question about a 5 percent sales tax. I have generally spoken about all the taxes. We won't give in as far as the issue of taxes is concerned. Here a question of why it is not being used in other republics is asked. Who told you that it is not being used? It is recorded in an economic agreement. It affects all the republics. Incidentally, 30 percent of the money which is earned from it goes to the Union budget and 70 percent to a republican and local budget. Third question. Contract prices in secondhand shops are directed, first of all, against consumers. Who is gaining in this case? Profiteers? This question was asked by Vasiliy Ivanovich Mamkin—No, Mamkin or Mashkin. Well, it is his handwriting. I do apologize. This looks like sh and so on and so forth. So, contract prices in second-hand shops will exist. If there are individual production activities, and if there are personal subsidiary plots, then products which are being produced there will be sold on the basis of contract prices. But those contract prices which are now, basically, being applied to foodstuffs—I think you mean foodstuffs produced by state enterprises—in this case this problem will be adjusted by a reform of retail prices. When we have...[changes thought] We are going for the following option so that this time, when we are affecting the whole complex of prices, including retail, we have to take this step in a very responsible and considered way, because we have not done this for 20-30 years on such a massive scale. Consequently we shall go for fixed prices for foodstuffs, fixed prices for the main manufactured goods, and for regulated prices for the remaining goods to which the fixed prices don't apply, so that this very difficult transfer is carried out in a controlled manner. This is a very important thing. The entire thing proceeds from foodstuffs. 100 percent from the price rises, are being allocated for compensations. The entire proceeds from the price rises on the manufactured group of the main manufactured goods are being allocated for compensations. We have to implement the compensations prior to the introduction of the new prices. Thus, this problem too will find its solution.

Nikolay Pavlovich Markov, works director—is that from the same works?

[Reply indistinct]

[Gorbachev] About maintaining the existing links. I have already spoken about that.

Mikhail Sergeyevich, the question of simplifying the procedure for recalling people's deputies elected by accident—mainly through ignorance - to bodies of Soviet power, deserves greater attention. By the virtue of their continuing presence in the CPSU and the bodies of power, they in essence get hold of information which they subsequently use for subversive work. Is this urgent question being studied by you? Comrade Tikhonov asks this. You know, I think democracy presupposes the contest and competition of the election campaign—the juxtaposition of programs, so that the people can see them—and democracy should also presuppose that once the people have seen whom they have elected and once they find it necessary to recall someone, if this or that deputy no longer enjoys their confidence, there should be such mechanisms.

But I must say that, observing how this issue was discussed at the Congress of People's Deputies and in the Supreme Soviet, I see that the deputies are not in much of a rush to adopt such a law. [noise from hall] Yes, but nevertheless, I think that if they claim to consider themselves democrats, and it is namely within the framework of political reform and the broadening and the dawn of our democracy that they came to these bodies of authority, then they must adopt such a law. In any case, I have sympathy and will help as much as I am able.

Here, Dzhusov, Anatoliy Ivanovich, director of the Svertiogorsk production association "Khimvolokno" has come up with a question, he has expressed the desire to instruct the Cabinet of Ministers to examine specifically the fate of the Baykal paper and pulp combine. Its closure without a simultaneous bringing on-line of capacity for producing (?cord cellulose) will lead to stoppages at a whole series of the country's enterprises, including the 12,000-strong collective of the production association. The production of tires with a viscose cord base will be cut by 71 percent, the production of a new class of materials for the country's wheeled transport will be halted, and so on.

In general I see a large problem and I take this note as a signal, but I decided to make this public since this concerns many enterprises which are often halted on the basis of resolutions made at meetings without proper expert evaluation, serious analysis, and without the wish to do everything in order to exclude any harmful ecological consequences while maintaining production. Many enterprises have been halted in our country. Not only have we lost in this regard alone around 10 billion [not further specified], but if we take into consideration that this has affected other enterprises throughout the country, then this is a major question.

In one of my decrees I wrote in the demand that all these incidents be examined so as to undertake certain measures which would guarantee the safe functioning of these producers, but without fail everything should be working; moreover our hard currency possibilities are limited and we cannot solve problems by buying these raw materials, in particular chemical materials, abroad.

We've had an urgent telegram here, in the presidium, with a request to pass it to the president. I am asked here by the collective of the Narovlya hydraulic equipment works to visit the strict control zone. Well we've actually had a representative, a secretary I think, or the rayon executive committee chairman from Bragino, speaking here and telling us about it.

[Unidentified speaker] That was from Bragino, but we have someone from Narovlya present here.

[Gorbachev] Eh?

[Speaker] We've had a speaker from Bragino, and we have someone from Narovlya here.

[Gorbachev] They are here?

[Speaker] That's right.

[Gorbachev] All in all I should tell you that if it were not for the fact that travelling took four hours, we wanted precisely— and the comrades from Bragino know this— we wanted to come first of all to that zone. But that's how it goes, as they say, not everything is up to us. Nevertheless, I just want the comrades to know that we understand their concern and we shall take this into consideration in working the questions through.

Viktor Nikolayevich Taran asks here when will the law on defense, and the batch of documents proceeding from it on the USSR Armed Forces, be adopted. It is already before the Supreme Soviet—I think I am right in saying this—in committees, and it is being worked through. Soon there will be such a law, it will be the subject of discussion and adoption.

City committee member, worker Skidunov, I think, or Skibunov, well, I'm sorry, it's the handwriting, asks three questions.

One. The Declaration of Human Rights and the fact that in Lithuania they are refusing to register the rules of the Communist Party of Lithuania-CPSU. What is your view? Human rights and democracy. I think wherever human rights are trampled on, there is no question of any democracy. Wherever sociopolitical organizations and parties set up on the basis of the law are not registered—and the setting up of this party is not something new, it exists there—that's a violation both of democracy and of the principles laid down in international law on human rights aspects. I think that in the end, Lithuania will take the right position. Furthermore, the documents that are being adopted contrary to the USSR Constitution and these international pacts are repealed by decrees of the USSR president; they are deemed to be acts without legal force.

Two. Who should be responsible before whom for the unwarranted decline in the volume of production, and how should this be expressed?

Well, I see this question as supplementary to the point that a rupturing of economic links is taking place, which is turning precisely into decline in production. I think that first and foremost the responsibility should be accepted by the leadership of the country and the leaderships of the republics. First and foremost. They—having understood this—have reached an economic agreement, but they continue to violate the economic agreement. I think this should be said today so that both at the center, at the Union level, and at the republican level the necessary practical conclusions are drawn from this.

A question about prices. Well, I have already talked about prices.

There is a request here to convey to everyone, presumably through this platform or a different one, to representatives of every people of the country, that interethnic conflicts are a calamity which worries all of us, in all republics. We have heard this from the platform too, and comrade [word indistinct] writes about this again.

Well, there is a question about prices here. I have already spoken about this, Comrades.

Right, here are five questions. I will start with No. 5. Why at the airport, writes Comrade Kazachok, did you say hello to Comrade Dementey, chairman of the republic's Supreme Soviet, while the party leadership was left without your attention? [laughter]

This does not correspond to the truth. Here, the officer commanding the military district can confirm it, as a kind of neutral man, so to speak. He, too, was there, and I also said hello to him, not only to the party men. Presumably it was somehow presented this way. But then you have to work out who over here presents these things like that and why. That's why I began with question five, since it was the hardest one.

The present soviets have a communist majority. The Communist Party is becoming a legislative-type party. In these conditions the soviet chairman should logically also be at the head of the party organization. What do you think on this point?

On this point I would say the following: let the chairman carry out his duties while the communists elect their leaders and the coordinator of their activity, who will work on a full-time basis and act. I believe that the soviet chairman, who today represents the party that won, the communists, has duties which go beyond party duties, so to speak, a long way beyond. This is a division of functions between the party and the state. That is one point. Second, he has to engage in permanent dialogue and contacts with all representatives of public movements, all sorts of deputies groups, and so on. This, I think, would be the right way. The Communists, just like any other political organization or public movement, will always find the right person to select as their coordinator. I think that would be more correct and that precisely is a good thing.

Will the labor law be changed under the new conditions and when?

You know, I think we have entered a road of deep transformations in our economy, and this, all in all, is a major restructuring in connection with reforming the relations of ownership and moving to a mixed economy. Without doubt all our labour legislation should be renewed. We cannot go on with a legislation which was adopted to suit the particular economic environment; this shold be a different one. Another point: We already have first elaborations on this account.

Is the government able to harness the growth in wholesale prices for manufactured goods and building materials. At the same time, the rigid procurement prices for agricultural products are sharply worsening the situation of the countryside. These are presumably signals coming from the countryside.

Well, first—I think Nikolay Ivanovich [not further identified] should help out—we have left the retail prices for building materials on the list for which fixed prices are being established.

[Unidentified speaker] Yes, that's right.

[Gorbachev] So that all that is there [?word indistinct].

[Speaker] And housing and everything connected with it.

[Gorbachev] And furniture. These are things connected with the housing issue. We have thus taken them into consideration. That was the vifew of all the leaders of the republics. That is in the agreement on prices, the draft of which I told you is being worked through and sent out.

[Moderator] Comrades, it is very noisy in the room; settle down.

[Gorbachev] Well, it worries comrades. They will probably say that it is hard to believe, since something else is probably going on in life.

[Unidentified speaker] Mikhail Sergeyevich, you mentioned furniture; when it is sold as a complete set, it will be for a price, so to speak, an agreement. But what is sold separately as individual pieces is not sold [words indistinct]. This is how it is written down. All furniture sets, in short.

[Gorbachev] I will tell you, when I see your faces like this, I think that not everything is yet lost for us, esteemed comrade president! The construction of a law-abiding state is announced in our country. But in reality there is a mess, chaos; elementary order is absent, laws issued by the president and the USSR and the Belorussian SSR Supreme Soviet in the majority do not work. Sometimes they are issued in such a form that it is

not known how to approach them in order to use them. I think everything said here is correct.

First, qualitative laws are needed, a distinct addressee should be seen, an executive mechanism should be present. First, I believe this is connected with the fact that we have to settle the allocation of powers between the center and the republic at the level of executive power and within the framework that union laws and republican laws will operate in their spheres. They will be provided there with all the authority of executive power and other bodies. Therefore, let us move faster toward the Union treaty and everything connected with it. What is more, this morning, while traveling, I was talking on the telephone in the car. It was reported to me that the work on the draft Union treaty is continuing on the basis of the remarks expressed by the republics at the Soviet of the Federation, where all representatives of republics or their observers are working. The comrades promise to present a version of the draft Union Treaty agreed to by all republics by the time of my arrival. I think, you know, that if we are approaching this stage, then the next very important stage in the work on the Constitution is approaching. We have essentially suspended this work, though there are huge undertakings there. Tens of options which had been sent to the Constitutional Commission were considered. However, without making a decision on what form our new, renewed federation, or union of sovereign republics should take, we were unable to continue this work.

So, the completion of this work, at least, at draft level, already agreed with the republics, opens up an opportunity for the Constitutional Commission, without waiting for the signing of the complete Union Treaty, to resume its work, and so speed up the process of preparing a new USSR Constitution.

Dear Comrades, for me the trip to Belorussia, to these rayons on the soil of Gomel Oblast, is of great significance from the viewpoint of feeling life's pulse, comparing our policy, the legislative acts being adopted, and the president's decrees with the real processes of life. Thank you for this frank discussion. I wish you success in your actions. [applause]

Addresses Vetka Rayon Soviet

LD2802122191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 27 Feb 91

[Report by correspondent A. Melnikov on remarks by President Mikhail Gorbachev at the Vetka Rayon soviet on 27 February, from the "Vremya" newscast—recorded]

[Text] [Melnikov] In the Vetka rayon soviet building today, an in-depth conversation was held [by Mikhail Gorbachev] with the deputies' and party aktiv, as well as representatives of the town public. The meeting was opened by (Voin) first secretary of the Vetka party raykom. He described in detail the difficult situation which had developed in his rayon. Pollution here has reached on average 20 curies per square kilometre, and though this is believed to be the norm, rather complicated problems are still emerging. Cases of illness, especially among children, have increased. Medical services to the population are in poor supply, and there is a shortage of doctors. Many of them have simply fled from here, forgetting their duty. Housing and everyday living conditions and the quality of food leaves much to be desired. But the main thing is that people want to obtain qualified and scientifically-based recommendations. What is the danger of the pollution, and is it possible to remain and live here?

Grakhovskiy, first secretary of the Gomel party obkom; Kondrusev, USSR deputy minister of health; Kazakov, Belorussian minister of health; Malofeyev, first secretry of the republican Communist Party Central Committee; and (Kenik), deputy chairman of the Belorussian Council of Ministers, also addressed those present. They were all bombarded with a whole shower of questions; unfortunately, there were very often many more of them than there were intelligent answers. On the whole, the debate was undoubtedly useful. Incidentally, it was relayed in full to the square where people listened closely to the speeches from the hall. The main conclusion which may be made from this is that there are too many problems and they must be tackled together. This is our common misfortune, and it can only be overcome together.

Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev summed up:

[Gorbachev] We shall complete this conversation in the evening, and we shall see, because there are local questions, tehre are republican questions, and there are Union questions. It all has to be sorted out as to who does what, and everything must be fixed. But I have already chatted with the republican leadership, with your oblast leaders present, and we shall probably have to have another look at how things are going and what point we reached today at the special sitting of the Cabinet of Ministers. There are questions there which stand out and which must be tackled.

But I think that clarity must be introduced. The fact of the matter is that when one reads the paper, one gets tired of reading all the many things that have been done. Incidentally, by this year—1991—R10.3 billion have been allocated from the Union budget throughout the country on eliminating the aftermath of the [Chernobyl] disaster, including R5.7 billion of capital investment. Over R3.8 billion has been allocated centrally to Belorussia for these purposes, including R3 billion in capital investments; and R2.5 billion in construction and assembly work, at the same time providing it with material-technical resources.

Well, all that has been allocated, but it may be that not all of it is being realized. Because the question of resources has been raised. Wherever resources need to be sent, they certainly need to be sent here.

So, things have been done and are being done, but there are questions which have come to the surface and they must be examined straightaway. And the main point is that everyone must be clear about things. Well, I have an idea here. And if everyone agrees with this idea, if this is a competent conclusion, then one must live on this basis and tell people. But I don't want even to start to read it out to you now. It exists, but I don't want to read it out because I am very much worried about the reaction to this concept out on the street, how people feel, how worried they are and how they are looking after their own affairs. But then, one must get to the bottom of something, to see either if it is connected with radiation or with quite different reasons. There must be absolute clarity, on the basis of which one can tell the people directly: Yes, that's how it is. One can live with such a level of pollution if the following procedure is observed, on this condition, and the degree of risk is such-and-such. The next thing is that people must be resettled; this is a threat to life, and children and adults must be evacuated. This is where the practical side of the question begins—how to resettle, where to resettle, on what conditions, and so on. Well, you have great worries, and as a human being I truly understand them and it is difficult just to ... well, keep your spirits up; and we shall help.

TASS Reviews Belorussian Supreme Soviet Session

LD2802191391 Moscow TASS in English 1857 GMT 28 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondents Vladimir Glod and Aleksandr Kryzhanovsky]

[Text] Minsk February 28 TASS—The Belorussian parliament ended its third session which began last December.

The session passed a number of regulatory enactments to develop market relations, make all kinds of ownership equal before the law, clean up the Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster consequences and strengthen Belorussia's sovereignty.

The parliament ratified the treaties of cooperation with Russia, the Ukraine and Kazakhstan and set up a commission to help prepare the draft Union treaty and the procedure for its signing.

It also passed the laws on the basic principles of people's power, local self-government, farmsteads, the militia, the priority social and economic development of the countryside and the agro-industrial complex, employment, entrepreneurship and foreign investments.

The Belorussian parliament is the country's first to adopt the law on individual income indexation taking into account inflation.

The law on social protection of the population has granted two million people in the Republic the right to compensation and privileges. Special programmes have been worked out to prevent the development of genetically harmful effects of the Chernobyl blast and to protect mothers and children.

The parliament instructed the government to promptly work out a number of additional programmes to revive the Belorussian countryside and produce foodstuffs for infants.

The parliament approved the plan for the reorganization of the Cabinet of Ministers under the conditions of a market economy. Some ministries are due to be scrapped in connection with the transfer of enterprises to work under conditions of profit-and-loss accounting and self-financing. The managerial staffs are to be cut by 30 per cent.

Moldovan President Condemns Holding Referendum

LD2802160891 Moscow TASS in English 1512 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] Kishinev February 28 TASS—Moldavian President Mircha Snegur, addressing a meeting of the Republican Presidential Council today, called a "direct interference in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state" a decision by the Soviet parliament to hold the all-Union referendum on the future of the Soviet Union on March 17, 1991, MOLDOVA-PRESS News Agency [correspondent] Aleksandr Tanas reports.

Meeting participants condemned the Moldavian Communist Party, which decided to organise the March 17 referendum in Moldavia in violation of the Moldavian parliament's decision not to participate in the plebiscite.

The meeting also described as illegitimate decisions by some local councils and the managers of enterprises, especially those subordinated to the all-Union government, to hold the March 17 referendum.

Moldovan Supreme Soviet Rejects Union Referendum

LD2802212991 Moscow TASS in English 2115 GMT 28 Feb 91

[By MOLDOVA-PRESS-TASS correspondent Aleksandr Tanas]

[Text] Kishinev February 28 TASS—A crisis situation formed in the Moldavian parliament. Most legislators representing the Agrarian Group, Communists from Realitatea (Reality) and Soviet Moldova, as well as independent deputies, did not attend the evening session on Thursday. Chairmen of those groups stated at a session of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet (parliament) that "their members will take part in the work of the parliament only on condition that Moldavian Prime Minister Mircea Druk will resign".

Since there was no quorum, chairman of the republican parliament Alexandru Moshanu said that "the session is stopping its work for an indefinite period of time."

During parliamentary hearings on the results of the inspection of foreign economic activities of the Moldavian Government, the opinions of legislators divided. Some of them believed that the main reason for the violations in export-import operations, made by members of the Cabinet of Ministers was the absence of skilled specialists with international experience. Others accused the government of the abuse of authority and demanded the resignation of the prime minister.

The parliamentary crisis was the result of different approaches to the conclusions, drawn by the commission.

"We need time to find a way out of the crisis situation," Alexandru Moshanu said. He suggested that people's deputies go to their respective constituencies in order to consult the electors and explain to the them the parliament's stand on the issue of the nationwide referendum.

The Moldavian parliament adopted a resoluion saying that it is not feasible to hold a referendum on March 17, this year.

Ukraine's Fokin Appeals to Miners Not To Strike

LD2802220191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 28 Feb 91

[From the "Vremya" Newscast]

[Text] Talks between the Ukrainian Government and representatives of the Donbass mine strike committees have been going on for several months. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to achieve a final agreement. In connection with the fact that the miners are preparing to strike on 1 March, Vitold Pavlovich Fokin, the chairman of the Ukrainian Council of Ministers, spoke on Ukrainian television with an appeal to the republic's citizens:

[Begin Fokin recording] In the first place the Ukrainian Council of Ministers has shown its consistency as regards questions of monitoring the implementation of USSR Council of Ministers Resolutions Nos. 608, 717, and 47.

Second, and most important, prices for coal production in 1991 were raised to R90.93 [rubles] a tonne, which is 2.4 times higher than the 1990 level. Subsidies of R12 billion have been established, and almost R1 billion of capital investments have been set aside in the budget for the social development of mining villages.

Third, the government has adopted the proposal on the level of the state order: for cooking coal 95 percent and for power coal 90 percent of the target set.

We have also achieved an agreement on the pensions issue. The government, despite the—putting it delicately—prejudice of the 26 January protocol has nevertheless signed all seven points, except for one. We were not able to agree with strike committee representatives on the question of wages which, according to their demands, should be raised by two to two-and-a-half times. What is behind these excessive requests? Who will say why 2 to 2.5 times? Time will pass and history will put everything in its place, and we will possibly discover who is the real author of this idea. But one thing is clear, and it is clear just now, this has been done only so that these demands are deliberately made impossible to fulfill, so that no compromise is possible, so as to push the miners toward a strike at any price.

To fulfill the requests of the strike committees the government has to find an additional R5 billion or so. This is while the state budget for 1991, as many people know, has been drawn up with an R11 billion deficit. Tell me, please, from which part are we to cut out these billions, or to be more precise, from whom are we to take them? The answer, on the whole, can be quite definite. For this it would be necessary to cut the amount aimed at compensating the population in connection with the coming retail price increases: and it would be necessary to repeal the wage rises already announced for teachers, health workers, and workers in kindergartens. It would, finally, be necessary to forget about pensioners, invalids, and other unprotected parts of our society.

Can the government decide on such measures? Of course not. The key to solving these pressing social problems is to be found not in the sphere of allocating material benefits, but only in the sphere of their production.

For this reason I appeal to you, my dear compatriots, dear miners, friends. I turn to you with the request to be balanced in your attitudes to the decisions taken and to soberly evaluate the possible consequences. [end recording]

Caucasus

Georgia Rejects 17 March Referendum

LD2802182191 Moscow TASS in English 1807 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] Tbilisi February 28 TASS—The Georgian parliament today decided against participation in the all-Union referendum on the future of the USSR, which is scheduled for March 17.

Legislators substantiate their decision by saying that "the Georgian people twice confirmed their wish to have independent statehood by the elections in 1919 and then in 1990".

"Mindful of this, the Georgian people are not facing the problem of holding a referendum on the future of the Soviet Union."

Instead of this referendum, the Georgian parliament decided to hold a Republican referendum on March 31, 1991 on the restoration of Georgia's independence based on the act of its independence of May 26, 1918.

The all-Union legislature and the parliaments of most Union republics favoured the holding of the countrywide

referendum. Azerbaijan, Moldavia, Armenia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have not yet made a decision to support it.

Earlier this week, the all-Union parliament declared illegal decisions by some republican legislatures blocking the referendum.

Speaking at a meeting with Belorussian intellectuals in Minsk on Tuesday, President Mikhail Gorbachev censured those who advocate defederalisation and try to pass "this anti-Union and anti-popular plan as the credo of democracy".

According to Gorbachev, "democrats" conclude a political alliance with separatists and nationalist groups in the struggle for power.

Automatic Weapon Fire Heard in Tskhinvali

LD2802175991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1115 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] Moscow, 28 Feb (TASS)—Despite the end of the power blockade of South Ossetia, a tense situation remained there in the past twenty-four hours. As a TASS correspondent was informed at the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs, press center, on Wednesday around 1300 unidentified people in a passing car opened fire with automatic weapons in one of the streets in Tskhinvali. There are no victims. Shots were also heard in the evening and during the night.

According to the information of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs, over 10,000 refugees of Georgian nationality had arrived from South Ossetia by 27 Feb. A total of 6,000 of them were housed in Tbilisi, the rest were housed in other republic rayons.

Tskhinvali Schools, Enterprises 'Not Operating'

LD2802204591 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 28 Feb 91

[From the "Vremya" Newscast]

[Text] For the third month in Tskhinvali, industrial enterprises, shops, schools and all vital institutions are not operating. Water supplies are often interrupted. There is a catastrophic food shortage in the town. Flour stocks have run out at the local bakery. Traffic has again begun moving along the Transcaucasus highway, but last night in the village of (?Kekhvi) a bypass route leading to Tskhinvali was again blown up. Again food, medicine and fuel supplies to the town have been halted. A convoy with South Ossetian food has been delayed.

According to information from the South Ossetian Interior Ministry, Georgian internal affairs bodies are continuing to confiscate weapons and equipment from illegal formations. However, this action is being carried out extremely ineffectively in the area under a state of emergency.

Central Asia

Kirzghiz Obkoms Elect First Secretaries

PM2702152391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 25 Feb 91 Second Edition p 2

[TASS report: "Newly Formed"]

[Text] Beshkek, 24 Feb—The constituent conference of the Chuy Kirghiz Communist Party Obkom [Oblast Party Committee]—re-formed after 32 years—has taken place. V.G. Mamontov, who previously worked as head of the Kirghiz Communist Party Central Committee Agrarian Policy Department, has been elected obkom first secretary.

Z. Kutmanova, who previously worked as first secretary of Ala-Bukinskiy Party Raykom [Rayon Party Committee], has been elected first secretary of the newly formed Dzhalal-Abad Kirghiz Communist Party Obkom at its constituent plenum.

A.M. Masaliyev, CPSU Central Committee Politburo member and first secretary of the Kirghiz Communist Party Central Committee, spoke at the conference and plenum.

Leninabad To Be Renamed Khudzhand

LD2702163891 Moscow TASS in English 1503 GMT 27 Feb 91

[By TAJIKTA-TASS correspondent Galina Gridneva]

[Text] Dushanbe February 27 TASS—Leninabad, a regional centre in northern Tajikistan, a Soviet Central Asian republic, has been returned its ancient name of Khudzhand. The Tajik parliament decided to rename the town after a referendum was held there last December.

Khudzhand is one of the most ancient Tajik towns. It celebrated its 2500th anniversary two years ago. The Great Silk Road passed through it in ancient times. The town takes pride in many famous medieval oriental writers and philosophers who lived and worked there. Jules Verne chose Khudzhand as the place of residence for a hero of one of his fantastic novels.

"The renaming of our town is the correct way to restore historical justice," the mayor of the city Dadodjon Ashurov told TAJIKTA-TASS. It is not an encroachment upon Lenin's memory. One of the city's finest streets bears Lenin's name, and there is a monument to Lenin in central square.

Ancient names are now being returned to towns and villages throughout the republic. At the same time, the Tajik parliament passed an enactment, prohibiting naming towns and villages after men or women, irrespective of their merits.